DOJ: Erap got ₱189M from GSIS, SSS deal

STORY ON PAGE A2

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PHILIPPINE DAILY INQUIRER
BALANCED NEWS, FEARLESS VIEWS

TUESDAY, FEBRUARY 27, 2001 ★ 50 PAGES 4 SECTIONS VOL.16 NO. 81 ₱15

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Comelec to OK rules on political ads today

BY GERALD G. LACUARTA

ONE HUNDRED twenty minutes on TV. This is all the television ad time candidates for national office will get under the implementing rules and regulations of the Fair Election Act of 2001, which is set to be approved by the Commission on Elections today.

COMELEC/ A5

'AFP turmoil worsens'

Chief of Staff Reyes orders Admiral Wong to stop talking to media

BY CARLITO PABLO AND ARMAND N. NOCUM

ARMED Forces Chief of Staff Gen. Angelo Reyes yesterday gagged Rear Adm. Guillermo Wong in an effort to prevent the turmoil in the military from "getting worse."

A ranking military officer who asked not to be named said Reyes met with Wong yesterday in Camp Aguinaldo and ordered him to stop granting interviews to the media regarding the Marine Corps' alleged questionable financial practices.

"The situation is getting worse," the officer quoted Reyes as telling Wong, who was forced to relinquish his post as Navy flag officer in command as a result of his recent public questioning of the supposed irregularities.

It was unclear how the gag order on Wong could stem the fallout from the issue that he raised before 300 Marine officers and men last Feb. 15.

Yesterday, details of the Marine Corps' questionable purchase of Kevlar helmets and HK-MP5 9-mm assault rifles, involving P3.8 million and P7.2 million, respectively, came out in the papers.

Military documents show that the purchases of the helmets and rifles were done during the terms of Major Generals Edgardo Espinosa and Librado Ladia, respectively, as Marine commandant.

Also yesterday, Ismael Aparri, formerly chief of the AFP Western Command and of the Navy's amphibious forces, confirmed the widespread and institutional practice of "conversion," the military euphemism for malversation.

It is one of the irregular transactions that Wong had wanted to stop in the entire Navy.

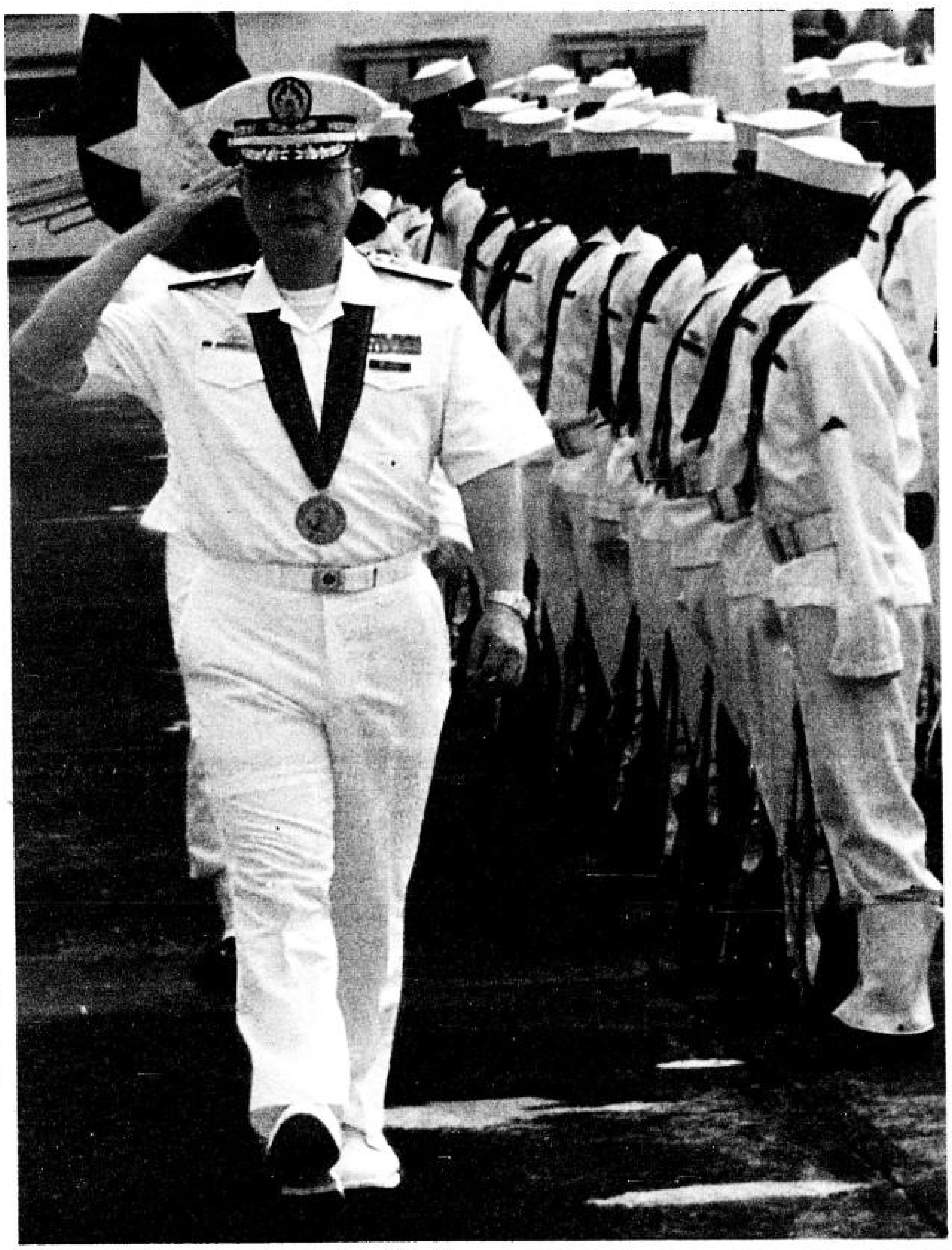
According to Aparri, a "conversion" occurs when a military officer or unit converts into cash an appropriated budget for purchasing supplies or paying for services.

"A supplier prepares the paper work and it will be made to appear that supplies were delivered when in fact these are 'ghost' deliveries. The dealer usually gets a 20-percent commission or cut," Aparri said.

Former Defense Secretary Orlando Mercado made a separate confirmation of this practice, and said it was the most difficult to countercheck.

"The papers are complete even if these are 'ghost' procurements,"

AFP/ A13



THE WRONG reasons busted Rear Adm. Guillermo Wong out of being the flag officer in command of the Philippine Navy. Here he troops the line during the change of command of the Philippine fleet at Sangley Point in Cavite on Friday.

CHARLIE SACEDA

Silent turf wars rocking Cabinet

BY ROCKY NAZARENO, TONETTE OREJAS AND CHRISTINE AVENDAÑO

CABINET infighting is rearing its head not only at the housing department but also at the departments of agriculture and transportation, according to a reliable Palace source.

The claim was made as Housing and Urban Development Coordinating Council Chair Michael Defensor met with President Macapagal-Arroyo for breakfast in Malacañang yesterday to discuss the latest controversy in the Cabinet.

But Defensor, who was upset because the Presidential Management Staff, headed by Vicky Garchitorena, had made two key appointments to housing agencies without consulting him, did not submit his resignation letter as he had threatened to.

The Malacañang source, who asked not to be named, said that Agriculture Secretary Leonardo Montemayor had also reportedly written a letter to the President requesting that "appointments to key positions in the DA should pass (through) him."

Pantaleon Alvarez, the secretary of the Department of Transporta

SILENT/ A13

DOH: Beef sold in RP safe but...

BY NORMAN BORDADORA AND CYNTHIA D. BALANA

BEEF sold in the country is "safe" to eat because it does not come from cattle infected with the dreaded "mad cow disease," the Department of Health yesterday said.

The DOH gave the assurance even as it admitted that it had no equipment to determine whether meats on the market were free from mad cow disease or bovine spongiform encephalopathy (BSE).

The Philippine Association of Meat Processors Inc. (Pampi) also assured the public that no contaminated meat had entered the country since the ban on the importation of

DOH/ A13

FVR role cited in GMA security

BY CHRISTINE HERRERA AND ARMAND N. NOCUM

IT was former President Fidel Ramos who asked police generals to ensure the security of personalities, primarily Vice President Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo, in the line of succession to the presidency, Director Hermogenes Ebdane said yesterday.

Ebdane, chief of the Presidential Anti-Organized Crime Task Force, said that while Ms Macapagal had her own security detail, the police generals made sure she was provided assistance in security matters.

He said the assistance included giving information on the prevailing political climate, particularly on possible sources of threats and violence as a result of the almost daily mass demonstrations nationwide.

"Aside from Ms Macapagal, we also volunteered our additional security assistance to the Senate Presi-

FVR/ A13

WORD WAR

Chavit calls Ping a liar

BY CHRISTINE HERRERA, VOLT CONTRERAS AND ROCKY NAZARENO

"*SINUNGALING na, mahilig pa maglandi sa media* (He's not only a liar, but a publicity hound)," Ilocos Sur Gov. Luis "Chavit" Singson yesterday said of senatorial candidate Panfilo "Ping" Lacson Jr. who had accused him of meeting with "jueteng" operators on Feb. 16.

"He's using my name to get media mileage. He's a real user," Singson said.

Lacson, a former chief of the Philippine National Police, had earlier said that the governor had secretly met with jueteng operators at the Galleria Suites in Pasig City to talk about legalizing the popular numbers game.

Lacson said Singson appealed to jueteng lords "to temporarily halt their operations for two months pending the legalization of the numbers game."

But the governor said the Macapagal administration had no plans to legalize jueteng.

Singson said Lacson should

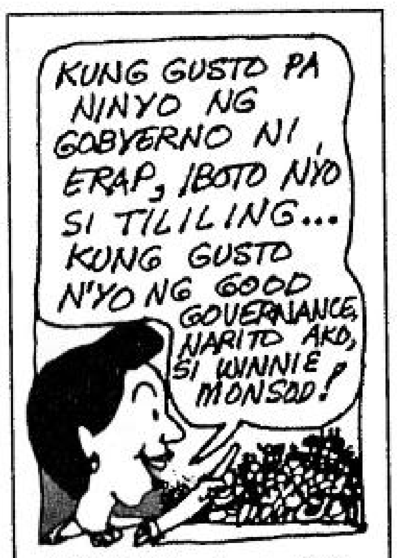
CHAVIT/ A13

Espinosa may be posted in Taiwan

IS THERE a falling out between President Macapagal-Arroyo and her "old friend," as she had described Marine Lt. Gen. Edgardo Espinosa?

Malacañang and military sources yesterday said that Espinosa, who just a few weeks ago was heralded as the strongest contender for Chief of Staff of the Armed Forces of the Philippines, is now out of the race

ESPINOSA/ A5


KUNG GUSTO PA NINYO NG GOBYERNO NI ERAP, IBOTO NYO SI TILILING... KUNG GUSTO N'YO NG GOOD GOVERNANCE, NARITO AKO, SI WINNIE MONSOD!

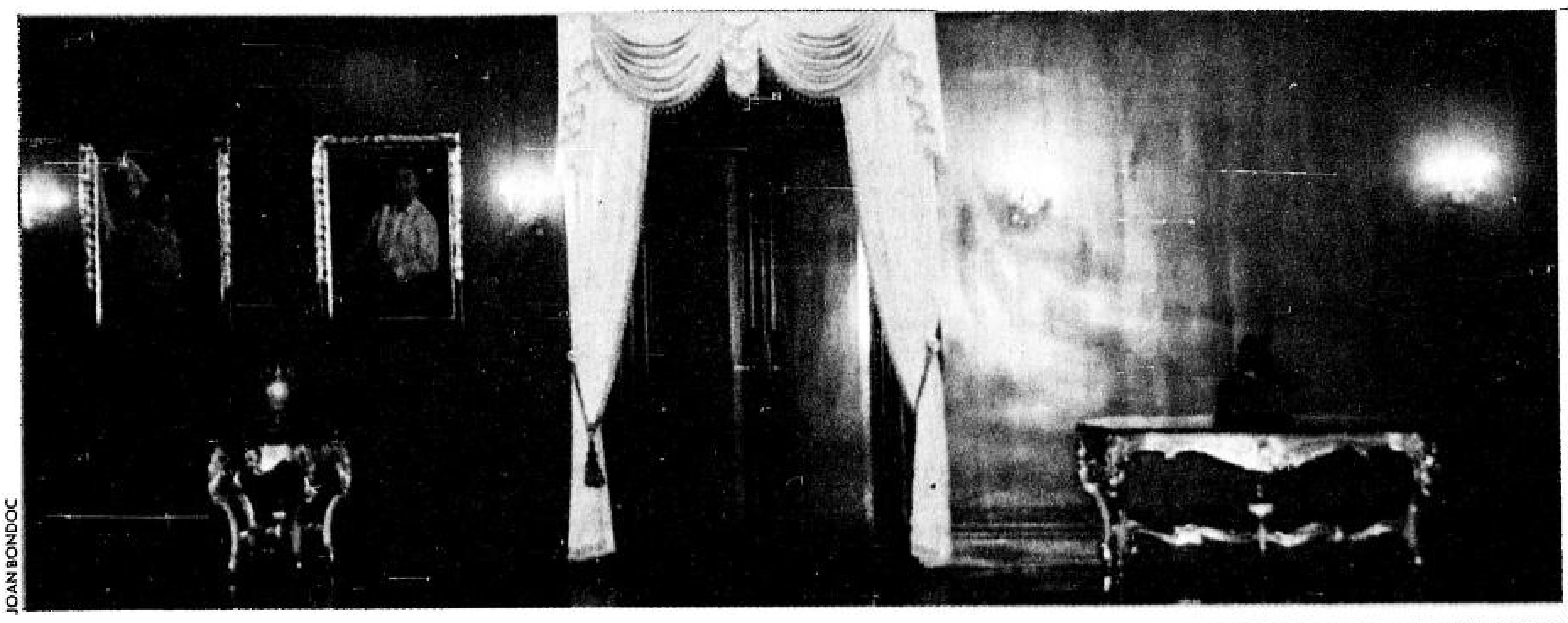
PPC bets told: Don't mention rivals' names

BY JULIET L. JAVELLANA

SENATORIAL candidates of the People Power Coalition (PPC) are forbidden to mention the names of their rivals in the opposition or to attack them by name.

This was according to a PPC candidate, economist Solita "Winnie" Monsod, during the first of a series of the Akbayan forum, "Challenge to Candidates," which aims to pin down senatorial aspirants on their platforms.

PPC/ A13



JOAN BONDOC

THE CASE OF THE MISSING PORTRAITS

A gallery of presidential portraits at the Palace reception hall has been a historic tradition but now an expanse of vacant wall waits, perhaps, for the Supreme Court to settle the question of the legitimacy of the incumbent before the portraits of Estrada and President Macapagal take their rightful places.

Second FRONT PAGE

ANG KAPAL TALAGA !!!

DOJ: Erap brokered, got ₱189M

By Cathy C. Yamsuan

DEPOSED President Joseph Estrada allegedly received a P189.7 million commission in the sale of shares of stock to the Government Service Insurance System and Social Security System in late 1999, Justice Secretary Hernando Perez disclosed in a news conference yesterday.

Perez said Estrada's earnings from commissions might have even run into several million pesos as he apparently was involved in other transactions using pension funds.

Perez said "billions of pesos" in GSIS and SSS funds were allegedly "malversed" by Estrada in his own stock market investments, based on evidence gathered by the justice department.

"The total amount involved is in billions (of pesos) but if we talk only of the commissions (Estrada made), it's P189.7 million," Perez told reporters.

"That's only one of the transactions," he clarified.

Two former officials of the GSIS and the SSS have been convinced by the Department of Justice to testify in the plunder charges it intends to file against Estrada.

Carlos Arellano, former SSS president and chair, and Federico Pascual, former GSIS general manager and president, have already submitted their affidavits to the DOJ.

A third witness, Belle Corp. executive William Ocier, has yet to submit his affidavit.

Perez said Arellano and Pascual did not receive commissions in the sale of the shares of stocks to their agencies.

"It is possible, however, that they bought shares on their own, which is really not covered by the investigations we are conducting. That subject is really not our concern," Perez said.

He explained that whether Pascual and Arellano had bought shares that were sold to their agencies "is a concern of the SEC (Securities and Exchange Commision) if (what they did) is a violation of the insider trading rule."

There have been speculations that Estrada made money from GSIS and SSS on the sale of shares of Belle Corp., the gaming firm that operates jai alai.

Estrada was alleged to have sold his P600 million worth of Belle Corp. shares to the GSIS and SSS for P800 million.

The two state-run pension funds are allowed to buy shares of stock in private companies so long as the firms involved have been shown to be performing well in the market for the previous three years.

Belle Corp. shares apparently conform to this requirement.

Atong Ang saying nothing new, won't be a state witness–Perez

ONE of ousted President Joseph Estrada's closest friends who has turned against him will not be taken in as a state witness unless he provides government prosecutors with new information about Estrada.

Secretary Hernando Perez said Charlie "Atong" Ang's draft affidavit, which the latter submitted recently to the justice department, did not give any new details about his dealings with the disgraced president.

Ang had indicated he wanted to testify against his former friend in exchange for immunity from charges.

The DOJ is readying plunder charges against Estrada based on the testimonies of witnesses at his recent Senate impeachment trial.

Several of Estrada's friends and cronies, Ang among them, fear they could be named as parties in some of those charges.

"Based on the proposed affidavit of Mr. Ang, we don't need him. What he is submitting is already known to us, for which we already have the evidence," Perez told a news conference at the DOJ.

Earlier, Perez said he had been approached by a lawyer claiming to be Ang's counsel who hinted his client wanted to seek immunity in exchange for his testimony.

Perez said the DOJ would only consider Ang as a state witness after assessing any new information he might deliver.

"Let us first look at what he has, if there are other matters he is willing to testify on which are not known to the government, (then) we could determine if he should be admitted as a state witness," the secretary said.

At the same time, Perez denied speculation that he met with Ang in Hong Kong over the weekend.

He said government prosecutors have no information on Ang's whereabouts right now.

He said the Department of Foreign Affairs has canceled Ang's passport and asked Hong Kong authorities to arrest Ang if he is seen there.

"Mr. Ang would not be able to go to any other country other than the one he is in now, but we don't know where he is right now," Perez said.

Cathy C. Yamsuan

Pagadian radio announcer shot dead

ZAMBOANGA CITY—A radio broadcaster was assassinated by unidentified gunmen in Pagadian City over the weekend, police said here yesterday.

Mohammad Yusop, a commentator for RXID station owned by Islamic Radio Broadcasting company, was shot in the head at close range by two suspects riding tandem aboard a motorcycle late Saturday, police said.

Yusop was on his way home aboard a tricycle when he was attacked and died on the spot after sustaining wounds to the head, according to police regional director Chief Supt. Domingo Dominador.

He is the second local reporter in Pagadian to be gunned down in two years. The murder of the first victim, Jun Halapit of the Radio Mindanao Network, remains unsolved.

No group has claimed responsibility for Yusop's killing, but police said they had launched a manhunt for the two suspects. *AFP*

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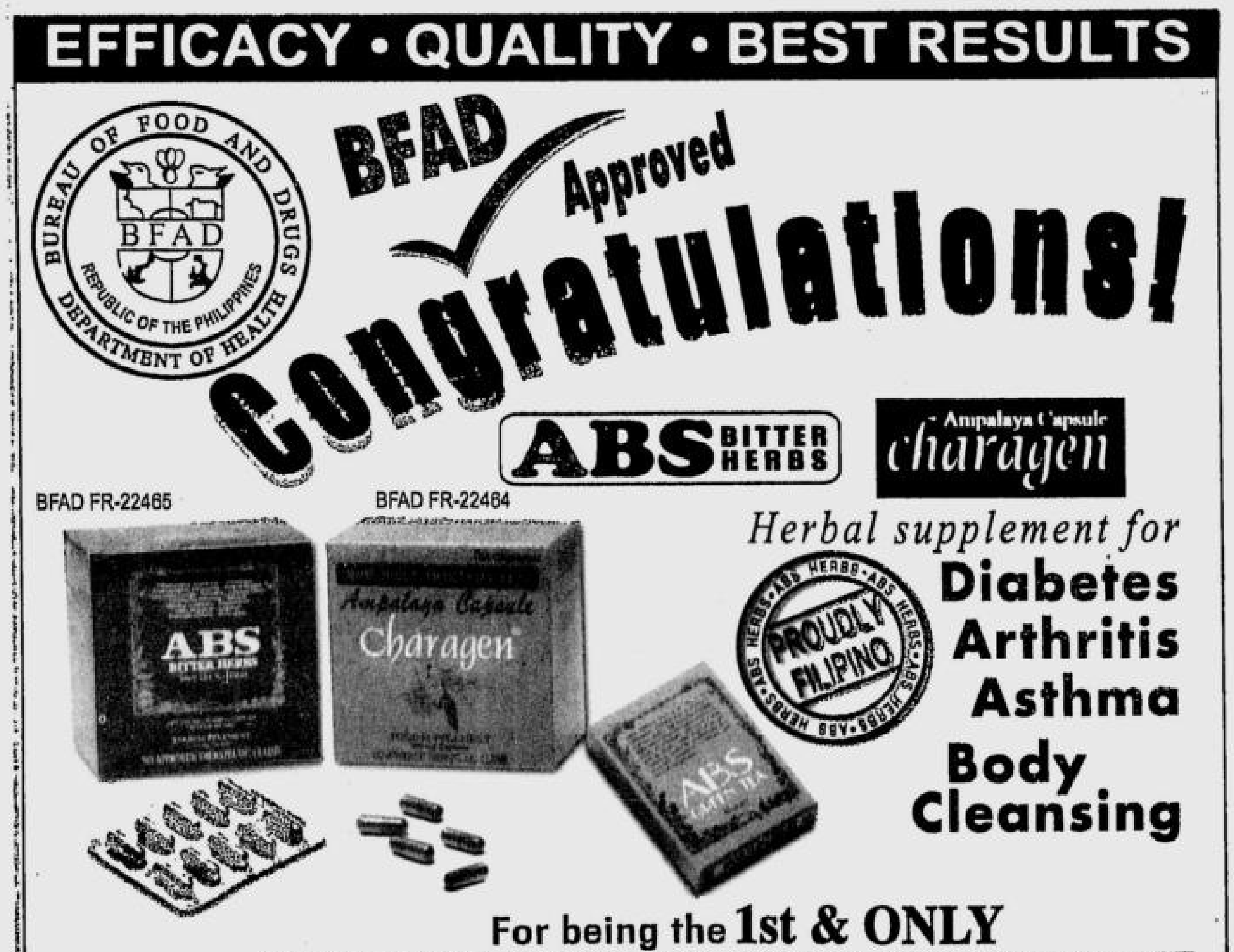
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Rule on presidency issue now, CBCP asks SC

By Norman Bordadora

THE CATHOLIC Bishops Conference of the Philippines yesterday asked the Supreme Court to immediately rule on the legitimacy of President Macapagal-Arroyo's government and the viability of ousted President Joseph Estrada's claim to the presidency.

Msgr. Hernando Coronel, media director of the influential organization of Catholic religious leaders, said the tribunal should quickly render its decision to take the country out of the "political uncertainty" resulting from Estrada's claim to the presidency.

"It has been already a month since the Chief Justice administered the oath of office on the President. The country needs a fair, just and quick resolution to the issue to take the country out of political uncertainty," Coronel said.

Estrada has asked the Supreme Court to declare him as President-on-leave and Ms Macapagal as acting President. He said he never resigned from Malacañang.

The CBCP's statement comes in the wake of planned mass protests in front of the Supreme Court as it deliberates on the arguments filed by Estrada lawyer Rene Saguisag and the Macapagal administration represented by the Department of Justice.

"Maybe they need more time to put together the legal arguments to justify the peaceful transition from one government to another. For (the bishops), it is a miracle. For the military, it is a withdrawal of support," Coronel told the INQUIRER.

"For the Supreme Court, they have to put together the legal arguments, if they are to support the action of Chief Justice Hilario Davide when he administered the oath of office to President Macapagal," he said.

Davide, who along with Associate Justice Artemio Panganiban, inhibited himself from the deliberations, said over the weekend that the Supreme Court would resolve Estrada's petition questioning the legitimacy of the Macapagal presidency soon.

"Just wait because I think it won't be long before the issue is decided," Davide said in Cebu City.

Militant groups are scheduled to gather in front of the Supreme Court today to denounce its decision to issue a temporary restraining order on the filing of criminal charges against the ousted president.

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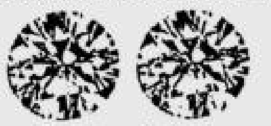
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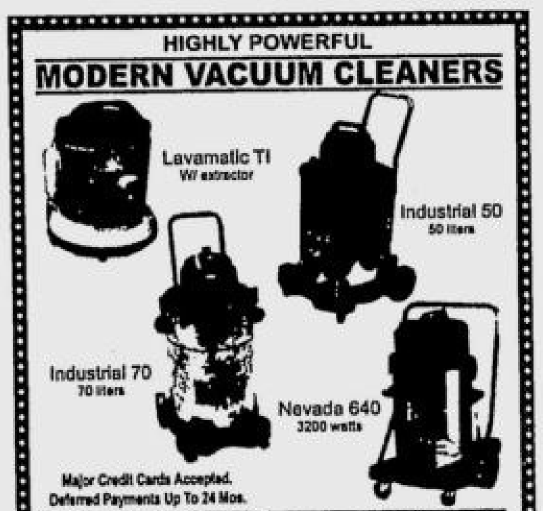

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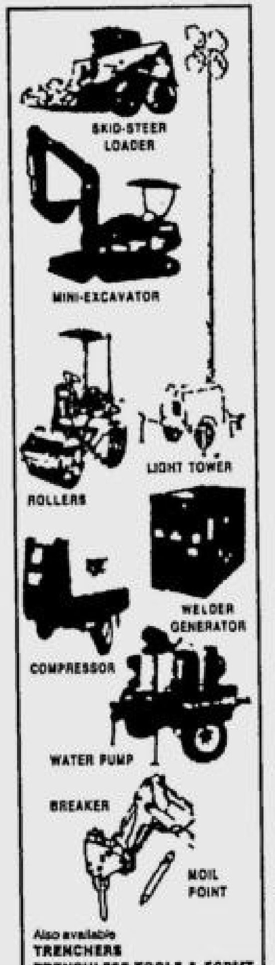

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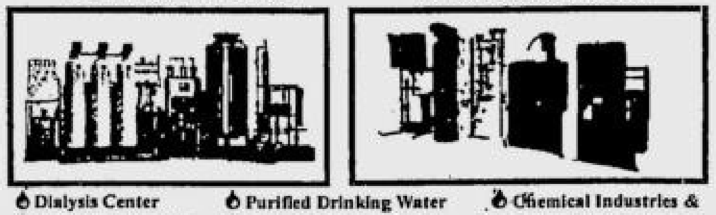
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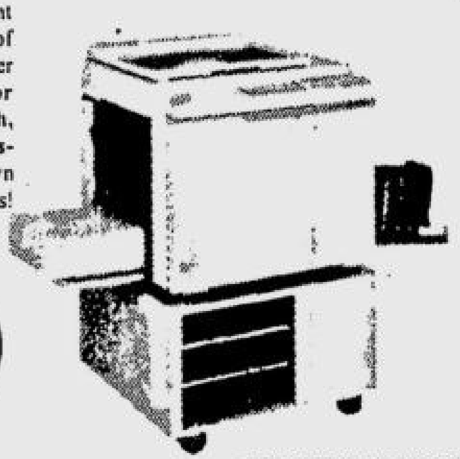

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Japan considering reducing ODA to RP after Cebu ambush

By D. Pazzibugan

JAPAN is considering cutting its official development assistance to the Philippines due to continuing security threats to its nationals here who work on government-funded projects.

The Japanese Embassy in Manila reiterated this concern last week after six Japanese project engineers and their two Filipino drivers were ambushed by three unidentified gunmen on the outskirts of Cebu City Thursday night.

One of the drivers was slightly injured while the rest escaped safely. Police are considering a possible robbery attempt as the reason for the ambush.

The six engineers were working on a 200-hectare city government reclamation project in Cebu City funded by the Japanese government.

The embassy immediately wrote the Department of Foreign Affairs on Friday requesting action on the incident.

Embassy spokesman Tsukasa Kawada yesterday said such incidents "might affect the assistance extended," as he stressed that "security is of utmost importance in extending assistance."

Japan is the country's single biggest source of ODA, although the amount has been steadily declining since 1996.

Last year the Philippines received P36.7 billion in ODA from Japan.

Two weeks ago, Japanese senior vice foreign minister Shishiro Ito reportedly voiced concern over security for its project engineers during his courtesy call on President Macapagal-Arroyo and Vice President and Foreign Secretary Teofisto Guingona Jr.

Ito reportedly asked for "adequate protection" for its engineers particularly those working in Mindanao.

The Philippine government had said it would extend "best efforts" to protect Japanese nationals.

The Philippines continues to rely strongly on ODA for development projects, but it had also started to focus more on market access and better trade arrangements with Japan.

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Comelec to OK rules on political ads today

(From page A1)

The rules will also allow candidates for national positions, such as senators and party list representatives, 180 minutes of airtime over radio during the campaign period.

The draft rules, a copy of which was obtained by the INQUIRER, showed that candidates for local offices, however, would be allowed only 60 minutes of TV ad time and 90 minutes on the radio, whether purchased or donated.

Print advertisements shall not exceed one-fourth of the page in a broadsheet and one-half of the page in a tabloid, to be published three times a week per newspaper, magazine or other publications.

Comelec Commissioner Rex Borra said the time and space limitations were set to give all candidates equal access to media.

And to make sure actors do not get undue advantage, the Comelec has prohibited the screening of movies and documentaries portraying the life of a candidate, or those portrayed by an actor or media personality who is a candidate himself.

The media outlets, for their part, are required by the rules to give candidates discounts on ad price, such as 30 percent for television, 20 percent for radio and 10 percent for print, off the normal rates charged in the first three quarters of the calendar year preceding the elections.

Free broadcasts on TV and radio will be allowed but should be identified by the words "Airtime for this broadcast was provided free of charge by," to be followed by the name and address of the broadcast entity.

All media outlets are also required to furnish the Comelec education and information department a copy of all contracts for political advertising within five days of their signing.

Under the draft rules, no franchise or permit to operate a radio or television station shall be granted, issued, suspended or canceled during the election period.

The rules also encourage all members of media to "scrupulously report and interpret the news, taking care not to suppress essential facts or distort the truth by omission or improper emphasis."

"They shall recognize the duty to air the other side and the duty to correct substantive errors promptly," the draft rules said.

The Comelec, subject to availability of funds to procure print space and air time, shall provide "Comelec space and time" for all candidates on three different dates for TV, radio and print, the rules said.

During Comelec time on TV and radio, 30-second campaign spots shall be allowed.

Other restrictions are on campaign materials posted outside common poster areas and campaign materials in excess of the sizes authorized by law.

Permitted sizes are two feet by three feet for individual posters, while common posters for political parties and party list groups shall not exceed 12 feet by 16 feet, and four feet by six feet for independent candidates.

Espinosa may be posted in Taiwan

(From page A1)

for the post to be vacated by Gen. Angelo Reyes on March 17.

Sources said Espinosa, currently commandant of the AFP Joint Command and Staff College, was being offered the Manila Economic and Cultural Office in Taiwan.

"He is not going to be AFP chief," a Palace source said.

If Espinosa, a former commandant of the Marines, is really out of the running, the field is left to the three other top contenders, namely, Army commanding general Lt. Gen. Diomedio Villanueva, AFP Vice Chief of Staff Lt. Gen. Jose Calimlim, and AFP Deputy Chief of Staff Lt. Gen. Jaime de los Santos.

The Espinosa camp, however, is not yet waving the white flag.

Espinosa's intelligence officer Col. Marcelino Yacat said: "As far as we are concerned, General Espinosa is still a strong contender based on his record but also on the role he played in Edsa II."

Yacat said he was not aware of the Meco offer to his boss.

Espinosa, whom Ms Macapagal calls by his nickname, "Spine," is said to be the highest ranking military officer to have coordinated with the then United Opposition in the campaign to unseat Joseph Estrada.

Espinosa's group was responsible for Oplan Go Count the People (God, Country, People), an operational plan involving the withdrawal of military support from Estrada scheduled for Jan. 20.

Espinosa claimed to have been beaten to the draw by Reyes a day earlier on Jan. 19 when he, then Defense Secretary Orlando Mercado and the AFP top brass showed up at the Edsa Shrine.

Why

A military source did not cite any reason why Espinosa has been allegedly taken out of the race for the top military post.

The source, however, noted Espinosa would reach retirement age in August, meaning he has only five months to serve if appointed.

"Espinosa's appointment will not do the AFP any good because what can he do in five months?" the source said.

Yacat, however, countered: "There had been a precedent before in the case of Biazon."

Yacat was referring to now Sen. Rodolfo Biazon, a fellow Marine, who served as AFP chief of staff for only three months during the Aquino administration.

Espinosa, a graduate of Class 1967 of the Philippine Military Academy, is the most senior of the contenders for AFP chief.

Tainted

He also has the most extensive combat record, having spent most of his career in the battlefield of Mindanao.

However, Espinosa's service record has been tainted with his sudden relief as commander of the AFP Southern Command in Mindanao in February 2000. Espinosa's relief by Reyes has never been explained.

He was not charged for any wrongdoing, but talk from the barracks indicated that he was allegedly involved in illegal activities in Mindanao.

There is also talk that his relief was sought by Lepeng Wee, a Zamboanga City-based businessman and friend of Estrada. The businessman and Espinosa reportedly had a rift over business matters.

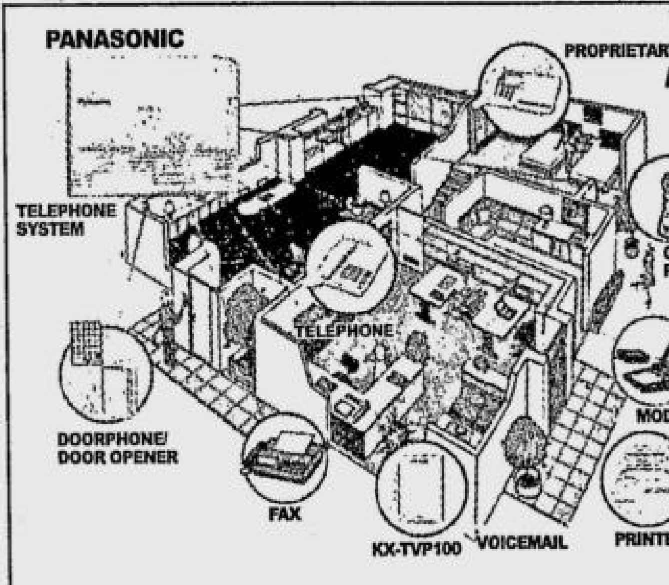
Yacat, however, said: "All these are not true. If General Espinosa did something wrong, he should have been charged."

It was also during his tenure as Marine commandant that the Kevlar helmets worth P3.8 million were found to be substandard. And out of 799 helmets paid for, only 299 were delivered. *(Story on page A1.)*

A three-star general, Espinosa is holding a demoted position as AFP-JCSC commandant, a post reserved for either senior colonels or brigadier generals (one-star).

Espinosa's name was the first to surface as the probable incoming AFP chief of staff after Ms Macapagal decided to retire Reyes even if Estrada had extended his term until next year.

About five or six days before his fall from power, Estrada extended Reyes' tour of duty until July 2002.



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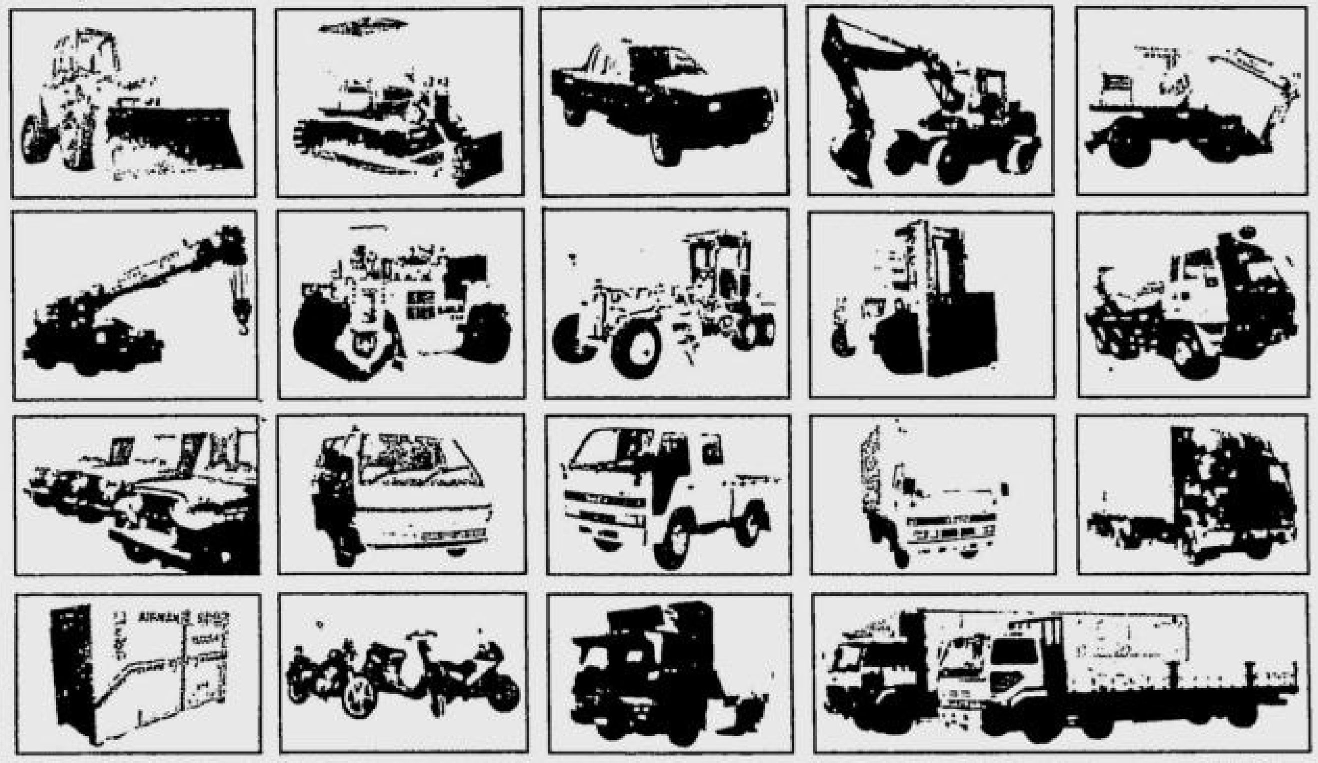

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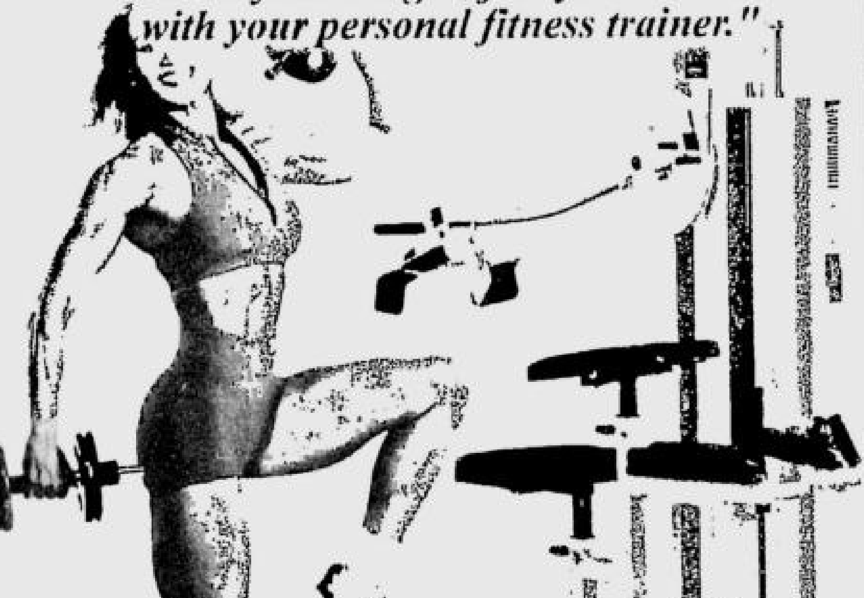

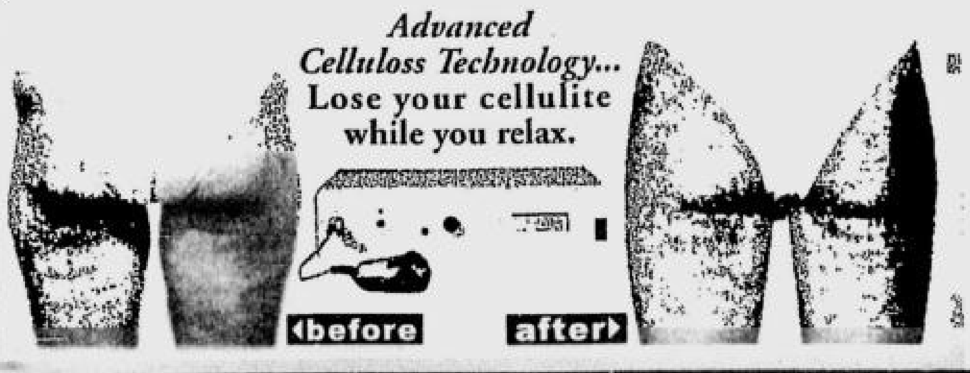
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Vol. 16 No. 81
ISSN 0116-2642

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The PHILIPPINE DAILY INQUIRER, INC. has its business and editorial offices at **Chino Roces Avenue (formerly Pasong Tamo) corner Yague and Mascardo Streets, Makati • P.O. Box 2353 Makati Central Post Office, 1263 Makati City, Philippines** • Our new telephone numbers are 897-8808 connecting all departments; Editorial Fax 897-4793, 897-4794; Advertising 897-4807; Circulation 527-33-42, 527-33-48, 528-01-83, 528-01-86 and 528-02-13, Fax: 528-02-34.

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AFP's crucial role

EDITORIAL

WE THANK the Council for Philippine Affairs (Copa) for the People's Heroes Award though we hardly consider ourselves heroic. We were just doing our job. Still, it is always gratifying to be recognized for the work that we do.

More gratifying to us newshounds was that it was on awards night that President Macapagal made public for the first time that she had since January 2000 been in touch with five different groups in the Armed Forces and the Philippine National Police who might have been actively plotting the ouster of the then incumbent President Estrada.

Which raises the question: Were the plotters not guilty of treason against a constitutionally elected president? They owed allegiance to their commander in chief; they breached the chain of command. They conspired to overthrow a legitimate government. Also note that these secret alliances were forged with Ms Macapagal at a time when she was still the Vice President and a member of Estrada's Cabinet.

Joseph Estrada's lawyer, Rene Saguisag, wants an investigation and, if warranted, to initiate court-martial proceedings against the officers involved. Among the more prominent officers Ms Macapagal credited for her ascendancy during the Copa awards night, Gen. Angelo Reyes stands out not only because he is the AFP chief of staff but more so because of his reputation as a constitutionalist soldier.

We are not privy to the thinking and beliefs of the acting chief of the Philippine National Police, Deputy Director Gen. Leandro Mendoza, who was, according to Ms Macapagal, the first military officer to approach her. She described the Mendoza group as even then (in January 2000) "working for the eventual withdrawal of support" from Estrada.

Reyes on the other hand had openly and frequently expressed support for his commander in chief, whoever that might be. He believes in and respects the sanctity of the ballot as the only avenue to effect a peaceful transition of power. He told the INQUIRER it was not for him to depose a president. That is, unless it became necessary to exercise the constitutional mandate of the AFP which is to protect the people.

But "around Nov. 4," which was the date Ms Macapagal said she began to "communicate" with Reyes through his chief of staff, Col. Victor Corpuz, no such necessity existed.

The Articles of Impeachment had yet to be sent to the Senate; the people's collective outrage over the insatiable appetite of Estrada for *jueteng* money and enormous mansions had yet to be offered on the altar of the Edsa Shrine. We didn't have the vaguest about that Second Envelope. Its time had not yet come. So with the notion of another People Power on Edsa. The people were not yet pouring out on the landmark highway of protest demanding the resignation of Estrada.

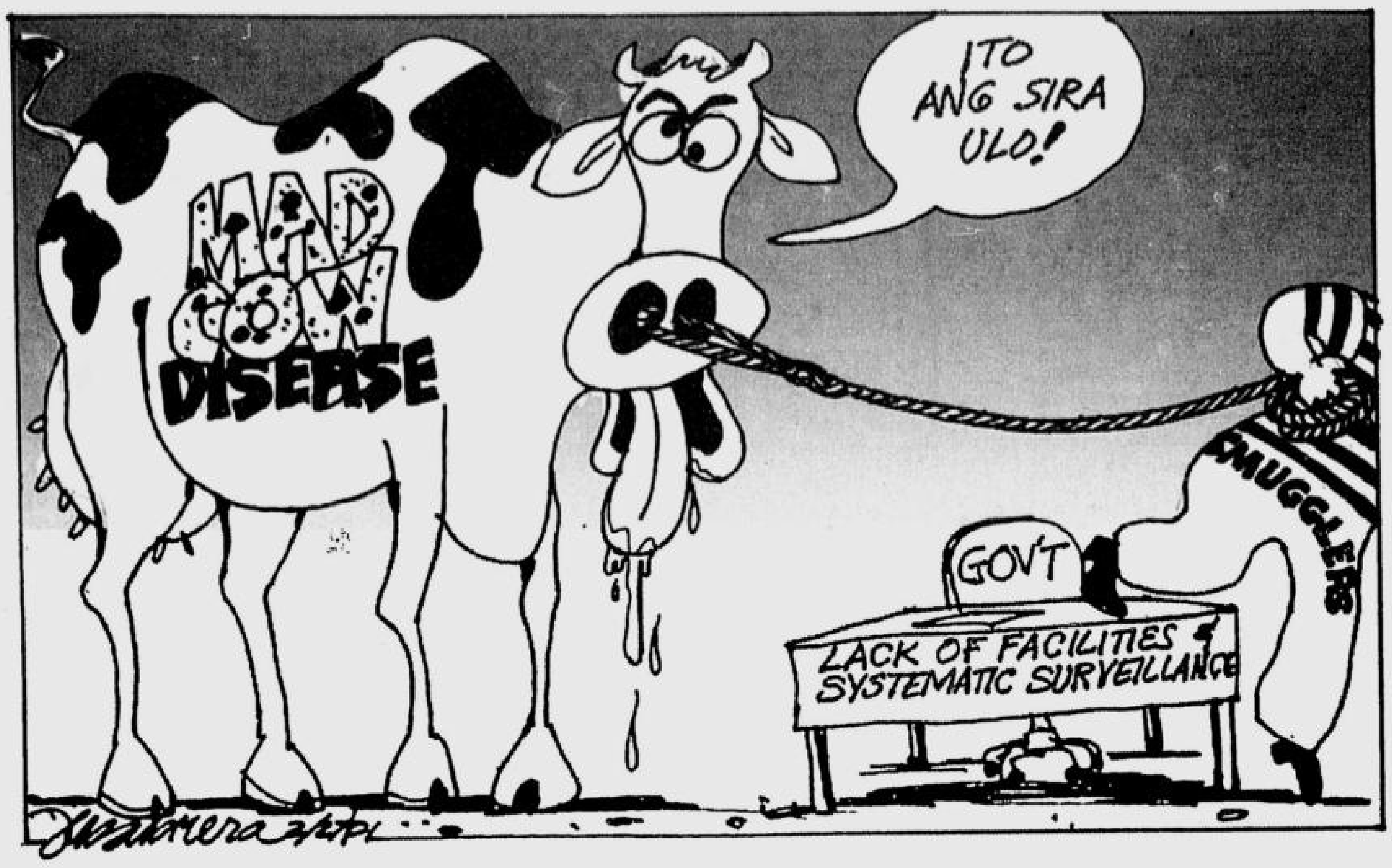
So, how explain the involvement of Reyes, the Harvard-trained constitutionalist? The plausible explanation is one that Reyes himself offered the INQUIRER: He was not in any way involved in a plot to topple Estrada. His going to Edsa was a last-minute decision. Not that he was not under extreme pressure to abandon Estrada from elements of the then political opposition and from the AFP, including his own chief of staff, Colonel Corpuz.

He admitted Corpuz was meeting the Vice President, but it was part of his job to know what was going on in the political opposition. Which is why he did not stop Corpuz from talking to Macapagal camp. He saw nothing wrong. Corpuz regularly briefed him about the meetings. Corpuz was convinced that Estrada was finished. We don't know if Reyes himself as early as last November was like-minded. But we do know that Reyes rejected all overtures at the time to withdraw AFP support from Estrada.

Reyes said that he upheld his constitutional duty even if he was being accused of propping up the tottering Estrada administration. When the chaos arising from the allegations of Estrada's corruption was running the economy to the ground and intensifying factions in the military that could possibly result in violence, Reyes made his decision. He withdrew support from Estrada to protect the people from economic ruin and a shooting war.

But who is to determine when military intervention becomes imperative for the protection of the people? That moment was well-defined during People Power I. Not so in People Power II. It was left up to the military to assess the situation and make the move to dismantle an abhorrent regime.

Though the victory of People Power II truly belongs to the people, it is the military that has emerged today as the crucial force that ensures the political stability of the country. This, notwithstanding the constitutional mandate of civilian supremacy over the military.



Are we doomed to repeat the mistakes after People Power I?

AS I SEE IT

Neal H. Cruz

IT is that time of the year again when we are bombarded with paeans to People Power I, when we chased out of the country the Marcos-Romualdez clans and their cronies like Danding Cojuangco. Yes, that was something to be proud of. But what happened afterwards is something to be ashamed of.

Changes promised by People Power I did not materialize. Instead of being prosecuted, the Marcoses, Romualdezes and their cronies returned like conquering heroes and regained power. Imelda Marcos is still flaunting her wealth and irritating polite society with her utterances. Imelda, Imee, Bongbong and the Romualdezes were even elected to public office. Danding Cojuangco remains one of the richest persons in the country courted by politicians. Juan Ponce Enrile, Blas Ople and Francisco Tatad, former Marcos ministers, are now senators who transferred their allegiance and loyalty to another president who was also ousted by People Power II.

So what did People Power I change besides the president? Nothing. Graft and corruption has not diminished but, on the contrary, increased. The amounts public officials stole no longer numbered in the thousands of pesos but in the millions. Poverty still stalks the land and squatters have increased.

A month ago, we had another People Power that kicked another president out of Malacañang, but it seems we are doomed to repeat the mistakes of People Power I. In spite of President Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo's claim to "new politics," the same spoils system that rotted past administrations infects her government. The same *trapos* who were exposed as corrupt in past regimes are being recycled and given positions in the new regime.

In fact, the spoils system has become even worse. Constitutional and civil service positions that were not touched in previous reorganizations by an incoming president are now being filled up with the new protégés and camp followers, despite the fact that the practice is illegal.

Would you believe that even art and culture is now fair game to politics? The position of chief of the Commission for Culture and the Arts, which pays a measly P5,000 a month, is being lusted after by the wives of several politicians. Officials of the Cultural Center also have fixed terms but they have already been replaced.

We have not learned from the lessons of the past. We may elect to the Senate the wife of the president we deposed, despite the fact that she shared in the bribes from gambling lords. Erap himself may escape punishment in the same way that the Marcoses have escaped punishment until now, 15 years after People Power I.

If we commit the same mistakes after People Power II, there will surely be a People Power III.

* * *

Another example of human recycling in the Macapagal administration is Cyrio del Callar, who was assistant secretary, later undersecretary, in the Department of Energy during the Ramos administration. He was retained by Erap because he is a close friend of Jinggoy Estrada and his wife is also personally close to the Estrada family. All of them are from San Juan.

Del Callar shepherded the controversial Omnibus Power Reform Bill through Congress, now hated as oligarchic, anti-poor, anti-people, anti-consumer and anti-government. Del Callar's signature is written all over this unwanted version. President Macapagal wants this version changed.

Yet, wonder of wonders, Del Callar is being pushed as the next secretary of energy. Who is pushing him for the position? Who else but that puppet master Fidel V. Ramos, the man who bankrupted the National Power Corp. by signing those onerous contracts with scores of independent power producers. Why does Ramos want his protégé in the DOE? Probably to protect his take in the IPPs.

Former Rep. Amado Bagatsing has been proclaimed by Finance Secretary Alberto Romulo as the official mayoral candidate in Manila of the People Power Coalition. His rival, former mayor and sportsman Mel Lopez, in a sportsmanlike gesture, announced that he would support whoever will be proclaimed, and would continue to discharge his duties as chair of the Lakas-NUCD and the coalition in Manila. Bagatsing is a recent member of Kampi, Gloria's party and a part of the coalition. Lopez also said that he will respect the decision of the party as to its choice of standard-bearer in Manila and will campaign for the victory of the entire ticket.

You think that matter is settled? Not by a long shot.

Former President Ramos and Sen. Renato Cayetano, chair of the Lakas chapter in the National Capital Region, are insisting that Lopez should be the coalition candidate in Manila. How can we support a *balimbing*? they asked.

Bagatsing, they said, was a member of Erap's own coalition LAMP and joined Kampi only during People Power II. His brother Dondon Bagatsing is secretary-general of LDP, and his own son is also a member of LDP.

For the information of the reading public, Lopez beat Bagatsing in the 1986 election for the Batasan by 200,000 votes. He also beat Mayor Lito Atienza, who is running for reelection this May, by 143,000 votes in the 1988 elections. He was beaten as a reelectionist by Alfredo Lim in the Manila mayoral elections of 1996.

'Trapo'

THERE'S THE RUB

Conrado de Quiros

FRANKLIN Drilon would wonder later on why he was included on the list. That is the list of traditional politicians, or "*trapos*," that the Anti-Trapo Movement, which kicked off last week at the University of the Philippines Bahay Alumni, would like the voters to avoid like the plague.

I can understand Drilon's dismay. He was one of those who performed heroically during the impeachment trial. He did not speak as often as Rene Cayetano, who tended to grandstand, but when he did, he asked incisive questions and made insightful comments. He showed a lot of heart as well, weeping openly, along with Loren Legarda, when their bid to open the second envelope lost. Boys don't cry, real men do. Alongside Tessie Oreta-Aquino jiggling in celebration over the illusory victory, that sight lit the fires of People Power II.

To now be included among the lowlife of Philippine politics, that is the unkindest cut of all.

Drilon's case simply illustrates the perils of mounting a campaign that lacks a sense of nuance. I do think it is vital to mount an anti-*trapo* movement, and I wouldn't mind lending my energies to it. *Trapos* continue to be a menace in elections, particularly local elections where ward politics, characterized by guns, goons and gold, continues to hold sway. But I also think, and most seriously suggest, that the concept of "*trapo*" be examined and refined further.

The concept itself is potent, and is probably the NGOs' biggest contribution to electoral politics. I first heard the word from Ed de la Torre shortly after the Edsa Revolution when he and his group were trying to usher in an era of "new politics," a politics that would advance "popular democracy" in the country. "*Trapo*" was the convenient acronym for traditional politicians, which ended up resonating with suggestions of what they were: dregs of the earth, riffraff, lowlife.

At first I thought it would be one of those NGO epithets that would perish by the wayside. But, no, it took a life of its own, and before long it became a veritable kiss of death for many politicians. Among its casualties were three people who might have become president had the label not attached to them like a leech. They were Doy Laurel, Ramon Mitra and Jose de Venecia. Laurel was Cory's second in command, Mitra and De Venecia were both speakers of the House, had the blessings of the party in power, and held vast resources. All lost in their presidential bids, which also ended their political careers.

Trapo is a powerful concept, but it is also one that is not so easy to pin down. Our understanding of it is really more instinctive or intuitive than logical or verbal. We do know that a *trapo* is someone who does not stand for anything, who will choose expedience over principle, who will smile and wave to the crowd, who will promise the moon and give the gutter, who will advance his career by any means. Characteristics that also apply dangerously to Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo, which probably explains why her approval rating before Erap went was very low. She has the aura of *trapo* hovering around her head, too.

But the fact that *trapo* is also wrapped in vagueness tends to make it expose certain ills while hiding others. I got to be aware of this problem way back in 1992, when many candidates, riding on the crest of anti-*trapo* sentiment, were passing themselves as non-traditional politicians simply because it was their first time to run for public office. Chief of them was Fidel Ramos, who claimed authorship of Edsa, and pitted his presumably non-traditional virtues against the *trapo* Ramon Mitra's vices. Yet Ramos had gotten to become a presidential candidate by the most traditional of political routes, which was by turncoatism. He bolted his party after losing the nomination to Mitra, and ran as the standard bearer of the party that he formed.

There was another candidate then who depicted herself as a non-*trapo*, but who got ahead by the most traditional of political routes. That was Miriam Santiago, who nearly got elected as president (she believes she did to this day, probably with reason) by securing the support of Emilio Yap, a scale of sponsorship that augured well for cronyism afterward.

I did say at the time that *bagitos* did not naturally mean non-*trapo*, any more than having been a politician for a long time naturally spelled *trapo*. I personally voted for Jovito Salonga, believing then (as now) that old as he was—as his rivals kept pointing out—he represented the best chance of ushering new, even youthful, politics into the country.

There is an even bigger problem facing the concept of *trapo* today. Which is the phenomenon of the entertainment personalities. Are they non-*trapos* because they are not using guns, goons and gold? It was the Institute for Political and Electoral Reform that came out with the study a few years ago that said popularity had supplanted ward politics as the decisive element in elections, and that the media had become more important than party organization and resources in making candidates win. Or so in national politics; local politics remained prey to vote buying and terrorism.

I wholeheartedly agree with the IPER finding, and would mark 1992 as the turning point. It was not only the year when Ramos won against Mitra, it was also the year when Miriam almost won against Ramos on the strength of her projection in the Bulletin. Then it became clear that it was only a question of time before Joseph Estrada would become president. It also became clear that it was only a question of time before show-biz personalities, who logically extended to the TV anchors, would throw their hats to the ring.

So what do we do? Do we consider them *trapos*, too? Or do we consider them the lesser evil? Certainly, as the impeachment trial shows, these seemingly non-traditional politicians have a way of swiftly becoming as *trapo* as they come, if they were not so to begin with. Look at Miriam, Honasan, Jaworski, Sotto, Revilla, Oreta and the other clowns that sparked People Power II by infuriating the public. Do we consider Ralph Recto and Kiko Pangilinan non-traditional politicians notwithstanding that they are aspiring to become senators by the now very traditional route of bathing in the waters of show biz? Do we regard Jun Magsaysay and Serge Osmeña as traditional politicians because they come from families steeped in traditional politics?

The concept of *trapo* needs further reworking. But instinctively, I'd go for Drilon over show-biz

Students must get involved in the campaign

POLITICAL TIDBITS

Belinda Olivares-Cunanan

LAST Saturday morning, as I did my weekly marketing at the Farmer's Market in Cubao, Quezon City, the LDP senatorial candidates were also there campaigning. Among them were former First Lady Loi Estrada, Senators Juan Ponce Enrile and Gregorio Honasan and former youth adviser Jamby Madrigal. What caught my attention was the huge van Estrada was using. It was equipped with a generator, air-conditioning, a bed and other amenities. See what money can do?

* * *

The candidates' presence stirred a lot of excitement among the market crowd and I noted some curiosity among the female vendors about this woman who was perceived as so much wronged by her husband and his many mistresses. *Ilan nga ba ang mga babae ni Erap?* one vendor wanted to know. The younger women were all agog about how *pogi* Honasan was.

But I noted that there was little of the outrage that we all felt at Edsa Dos, which happened just a month ago and a kilometer away. There is really something wrong in the tolerance of the Filipino *masa* for wrongdoing, such as massive plunder in government. No one among the vendors perhaps thought of the billions that Estrada and his families had stolen. Except for one or two men who seemed outraged, all they seemed to think of were the women in Erap's life.

* * *

As I watched the excitement, I realized how badly we need to educate our people politically so that they can be more discerning. To the *masa* (at least from what I could gather that morning) the issues seem to be above their heads. We need to help them become more discerning and analytical.

The students can help in the political education of the masses especially in this campaign. The students made up the bulk of the multitudes at Edsa Dos. They know and understand the issues. We hope they will all come out in the next few weeks after the close of school and take the issues to the people. This is where the people's organizations ought to be mobilized.

As People Power Coalition candidate Joker Arroyo put it recently, the students have "an unfinished business to do." Which is, to bring the Edsa Dos campaign to the people in the elections, by discussing the vital issues of the day.

* * *

Speaking of students, the big tragedy is that the Comelec failed to push through its earlier plan to hold another national registration of voters 25 years and below. The reason given was lack of funds. This means that many of the young people, perhaps the most politicalized sector, will be disenfranchised this May.

I heard that among those who had earlier planned to run in the party-list system was Teddy Casiño, the youthful, good-looking secretary general of Bayan. Teddy would have been a runaway winner, but he cannot run because he failed to register as a voter.

* * *

Last Sunday evening, our media group had a little get-together at the residence of that ageless high-priestess of "mosquito" journalism, Eggy Apostol, who ran the Mr. & Ms. black and white series in those daring years and who now publishes the irreverent Pinoy Times. The small party gathered the media women who were actively involved in the post-Ninoy activist press that culminated in Edsa Uno. Ace photojournalist Mandy Navasero dutifully recorded for posterity how we looked 15 years later.

Interestingly, however, as I recalled Edsa Uno, I note that some old issues are still around to haunt the memory, such as Marcos loyalist Arturo Pacificador, who is widely believed to have been behind the murder of the Edsa Uno hero, former Antique Gov. Evelio Javier, on Feb. 11, 1986. Last Feb. 16 proved to be a black day for the Antiqueños because the decision on the infamous Pangpang Massacre of May 13, 1984 was finally promulgated. The verdict was acquittal for Pacificador.

* * *

The families of the massacre victims broke out in tears when the verdict was read. It was ironic that the promulgation took place at the Calixto O. Zaldivar Hall of Justice, which was inaugurated only last October. Justice Zaldivar must be turning in his grave because the seven victims of that brutal massacre were members of his family, all from Pandan, Antique, the Zaldivars' hometown. They were all supporters of Evelio, who was running for the Batasan at that time. Evelio lost to Pacificador because he was cheated, but he eventually won his election protest in the Supreme Court in 1989. By the time his victory was recognized, however, Evelio himself had been dead for three years—brutally gunned down in broad daylight in the plaza of San Jose, Antique. His murder helped triggered Edsa Uno.

* * *

The Antiqueños are asking: If the six aides and military escorts of Pacificador are now serving life sentences in Muntinlupa, how come their master was acquitted? No one can accept the fact that these people would participate in the Pangpang ambush without orders from someone powerful. At the time Pacificador was known in Antique as the "Little Marcos." The Antiqueños are appealing to Justice Secretary Hernando Perez to help them in their quest for justice for the victims of the political violence that happened in the dark days of martial law.

* * *

As the nation awaits the verdict of the Supreme Court on the legitimacy of the Macapagal presidency, everyone, it seems, has his bit to say on this issue. In the February issue of Kilosbayan magazine, former Senate President Jovito Salonga noted that last Jan. 22, the deposed president, Joseph Estrada, sent an antedated letter to Senate President Aquilino Pimentel seeking to "modify" what he had done two days earlier, which was, "to abandon his title and office voluntarily, while in the possession of his mental and physical faculties." Estrada wrote that since he was unable to exercise the powers and duties of his office, the Vice President shall be "Acting President."

* * *

Salonga described Estrada's assertion as a "ridiculous ploy." He argued that whatever the formal cause for the termination of the presidency as set forth in the Constitution—whether permanent disability, removal from office or resignation—each of these terms is "pregnant with ambiguity" and can be clarified by reference to concrete facts. The reality, he stressed, is that before Estrada could be physically ousted from Malacañang, he abandoned his office and title of his own will. Those who want to put the legal causes for termination of the presidency in "new pigeonholes," said Salonga, may maintain that Estrada was "permanently disabled" while others may classify it as "removal from office" or "resignation." As always, he noted, the law suffers from the "tyranny of labels."

But except for the pro-Estrada fanatics, opined Salonga, all would probably concur in the result: "Estrada is out, for the good of the nation" and there can be no turning back for him.

Erap's republic

AT LARGE

Rina Jimenez-David

WAITING on my bedside table is a copy of "My Sad Republic," winner of the Centennial Literary Prize for the novel, written by Eric Gamalinda, a friend now based in New York.

Though I have yet to begin reading the novel, I know its rough outlines, based loosely on the story of Isio, who proclaimed himself Pope of Negros and joined the revolution against Spain and the war against the Americans. Captured by American troops in 1908, Isio died in a Manila prison two years later, a "bandit," as all those who continued the fighting after Aguinaldo's surrender to the Americans were labeled.

The story of Isio, the Pope of Negros, gains currency these days as we ponder the possibilities open to Joseph Estrada, who is, depending on where you stand on the political and legal question of his claim to the presidency, the former president or president-on-leave of this confounded Republic.

Right now, the country awaits the decision of the Supreme Court on the legitimacy of Erap's claim that he is still the president and that Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo is just "acting president." Since President Macapagal has already put together a virtually complete Cabinet, with new appointees filling up posts down through even the lower levels of the bureaucracy, one wonders what could happen if the Court should decide in Erap's favor.

Shall we see a massive reshuffle, with the old Erap appointees taking back their seats like a mad Trip to Jerusalem? How do we explain the development to friendly governments? Should the Macapagal administration send out formal notices of regrets to those that have already recognized it?

* * *

THIS is where Erap can take a leaf from the story of Isio, Pope of Negros.

Why can't he just stake out an area of his liking, most probably the great municipality of San Juan, and declare it his own separate republic? The magistrates of the Supreme Court may not have considered this option yet, but if it happened at the turn of the last century, why not now, at the beginning of the millennium?

As president of the Republic of San Juan, Erap can enjoy his own separate playground. He will have enough room to house all his families, and the power to appoint all his relatives and cronies to his new Cabinet. Jinggoy can be his prime minister, JV his executive secretary. He can even take in all 11 senators who voted not to open the second envelope, and call back Ping Lacson to the fold. Erap can even wield new wide-ranging powers as the founder of his own government. A new law he might want to promulgate is one legalizing polygamy, that way he keeps Doktora Loi as well as Guia, Laarni, Joy, Weng and who knows who else happy and content.

And when historians documenting his small republic label him a "bandit," they won't be far off the mark.

* * *

REACTIONS to the columns on Ma(i)d Miriam and Korina Sanchez:

Writing from California, Jojo de los Reyes confesses to feeling "relieved" that "I am not alone in thinking about Korina Sanchez's pro-Erap stance in her broadcasts."

Jojo kept track of the impeachment trial by tuning to webcasts, usually dzBB's, but on days when accessing the GMA webcast proved difficult, the ABS-CBN webcast was the only alternative. Jojo listened to three webcasts of dzMM, one featuring an interview conducted by Korina with Estelito Mendoza and Rep. Oscar Moreno, the Erap defense lawyer and a member of the prosecution panel respectively. "It was very obvious that Korina Sanchez was nicer as an interviewer and more supportive of the defense panel. She was very sarcastic with Attorney Moreno. *Mabuti na lang, marunong makipag-usap nang matino at malumanay si* Mr. Moreno."

The last time Jojo tuned in to the dzMM webcast, "Korina Sanchez defended herself on air, saying that she was just being an 'objective' journalist/reporter. In fact, she even mentioned on air that if the listener does not like her style of reporting, they should not listen to her reports anymore. That was an excellent suggestion from this media person to the public-at-large."

* * *

ON MA(I)D Miriam, Sam Aherrera, describing himself as "a fellow lower life form," comments that Miriam "haughtily sneers at (Filipinos) as 'lower life forms' yet reserves her adulation and awe for her British and American professors who must be squirming every time she mouths her legal pronouncements on judicial matters in her risibly absurd pronunciations and interpretations of the English language. The British have their stiff upper lip and the Yanks have their nasal twang, but Ma(i)d Miriam masticated both and created an irritating diction so convoluted that (had) the founders of Merriam-Webster collectively rising from their graves. Truly remarkable!" Sam is offering "a case of ice-cold San Miguel Beer to anyone who can produce a diploma from the UP College of Law and post-graduate diplomas as well for Harvard Law School, Oxford Law School and Cambridge Law School like Ma(i)d Miriam. There is absolutely no one on this earth as remarkable as her. From more than 75 million Filipinos and over 3 billion earthlings, she is by all intents, purposes and designs in a class of her own, an Extra-Terrestrial class."

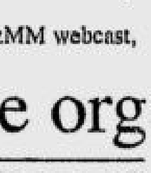
Don't chill the beer, yet, Sam for here's someone offering evidence for your side. A friend of one correspondent wrote to the custodian of the Cambridge University Archives to inquire about Miriam's attendance in that institution. The friend, who is himself studying at Oxford ("*at least may k siyang magtanong*") received a reply that neither the university archives nor the Alumni Foundation had any record of a "Miriam Defensor-Santiago."

On the question of Miriam's grade in the bar exam, someone in the UP Law egroup claims that the *senadora's* bar exam score was just 77, "hardly topnotcher caliber." Says a correspondent: "Truly, the truth about Miriam will set us free—from her."

About those pipe organs

SENSE AND SENSIBILITY

Bambi L. Harper



AS I was telling you about Ricky Jose's romance with Bohol (I mean you have to be in love with something or someone to bother with it for 20 odd years), the names he mentions are the stuff of novels. Consider the following: Andres de la Santissima Trinidad, Joaquin Escabo de la Virgen de Sopetran, Enrique de Sto. Tomas de Villanueva. And how about Blas de las Mercedes? You must admit that if you were writing a romance, the names resonate better than John Smith. One can hardly work in dungeons and moss covered stones to create atmosphere and then chose Smith as the hero's name.

I maintain its easier to imagine an illicit affair with a name like Manuel Carceller de la Sagrada Familia than George Brown. Okay, so this is all fanciful and only fit for a creative writing class. Still I didn't make those names up. They were culled from Ricky's research on friars who served in Bohol!

In the meantime, back to those pipe organs. At present these can still be found in Baclayon, Dimiao, Garcia Hernandez, Loay, Loboc, Loon and Maribojoc. There used to be bits and pieces of organs in Antequera, Cortes and Duero, but like those of Jagna and Tagbilaran these have all disappeared.

And speaking of Recollect friar Andres de la Santissima Trinidad (1726-1796), we are told that he used to be the organist in his monastery's order in Spain and may have been the parish priest responsible for acquiring the pipe organ in Baclayon. It was also during his tenure that the belfry facing the sea was built.

During the same period, another Recollect, Fray Diego Cera (Ricky calls him "the master builder of his time"), was building pipe organs all over Manila and its suburbs. He was responsible for the one in the Recoletos Church in Intramuros, the organ of the Manila Cathedral and of course, the famous bamboo organ of Las Piñas Church. He even constructed a piano in 1793 that was considered good enough to send as a gift to the Queen and win brownie points for the Recollect Order.

The organ bearing the date 1824 on its façade, located on the Gospel side of the choir loft in Baclayon, was built during the term of Fray Blas de la Virgen del Carmen who was assigned there in 1818 until his death in 1838. Bohol today has electricity, running water and some roads (the one to the Chocolate Hills is the pits, but it's heaven compared to the one going to Guiuan, Samar), so can you imagine poor old Fray Blas stuck in Baclayon making candles?

Anyway when he wasn't doing his evangelization bit, Fray Blas was keeping accounts. Baclayon's "Libro de Recibo y Gasto" notes that an organist was paid one peso in 1824 and the painting of the organ cost P10 pesos. That looks like less than peanuts to us, but back then one peso could buy 88 kilos of *palay*.

Subsequent entries show that the organ cost P1,211, paid in two installments. It had small bells and two keyboards although what has survived only has one. The repair of the bellows in 1835 cost P89, paid to the *organero.* Other repairs and payments are duly noted including the payment to three repairmen in 1885 of food plus P17, one real and 14 *granos*.

It's also interesting to read that the books of inventory of Baclayon list two large books, one of which contained music for 21 Masses! The other was for the Introit and vespers. Three choir books, an *antiforio, misal* and a *quirial* (sorry, Ricky doesn't explain what *antiforios* and *quiriales* are) were acquired in 1820 for P30, a small fortune in those days.

There were scribes who were hired (for P2) to write down music for the *libro de coro* (or *cantoral*), a *maestro de musica* employed perhaps to train musicians or compose music. Suffice it to say that the *cantoral* on display at the Baclayon parish museum contains an extraordinarily large collection of church choral music. For this, credit must be given to Fray Blas de la Virgen del Carmen who also installed a statue of Our Lady of Carmel on the Gospel side of the altar, which was stolen in 1987. Recovered, it was again stolen in 1997 and returned but this time minus one ivory hand.

Ricky also tells us that Fray Mariano Gutierrez de los Dolores was the parish priest of Jagna from 1825 to 1855 when he died. (Can you imagine 30 years in the wilderness?) Fray Mariano experimented with plants to obtain dyes and "trained his parishioners in the arts of leather curing and tanning, and of parchment and paper making." In the "Libro de Recibo y Gasto" of Jagna is recorded the salary for a cowherd in charge of *bacas de la iglesia.* Apparently there were several ranches in Jagna as early as the 18th century.

By the end of the 19th century, Bohol had several musical bands. There are accounts in the "Libro de Cosas Notables" in the Tagbilaran Cathedral saying that when the new belfry was inaugurated, bands from Loboc, Bilar and Dimiao joined the local musicians to play a Mass by Maestro Rossi on the first day and another by Maestro Calahorra on the second day.

Music majors may find it of interest that several choir books of parchment exist in Laoag, Vigan, San Luis, Pampanga and in the Intramuros Administration archives as well as in San Agustin. One even appears to contain rubrics in Ibanag, the language of much of Cagayan Valley.

We should be thankful that despite our disdain for the past, there are people like Ricky Jose who strive to preserve its imprints.

'Asuwangs'

YOUNGBLOOD

Maia Kristine N. Hermosa

*We want to know what the young are thinking about. What are their thoughts on current issues? We welcome contributions from the twentysomething and below.—**Ed.***

I did not really believe in *asuwangs.* My mother told me they were just phantoms of the mind, created to concretize the abstract concept of evil. Besides, I had not seen, heard or smelled one. But my whole concept of the *asuwang* took a different turn when, on my *Lolo's* 80th birthday, the whole family took a vacation in the province of Masbate.

It was not a grand trip, unlike one I would have dreamed of in Renaissance Italy or even just expensive Boracay. But I was happy because I was once again enveloped in the warmth of the welcome of my relatives.

My grandparents married in 1943, during World War II. They must have found it a good idea to replenish all those lost Filipinos, so they gave their share of 15. So it shouldn't be difficult to imagine how we looked and sounded at dinner time in my grandfather's two-story, airy concrete house in the small hamlet called Banadero.

At dinner time, the light blazing out from the tall windows in the dining room was usually the only visible light in Banadero at night. From afar, the house looked like a huge firefly, a sign of life for the occasional jeepney driver passing the lonely road on his way home. When the wind blew, you could hear our laughter floating in the air, happy voices mixing with the sound of frogs, cicadas and other night callers outside.

The first night we were home, our dinner consisted of *tuyo* and *nilagang baka.* I ate with bare hands like most of the others. Dessert was always the best part of dinner, and it wasn't cake or ice cream but the anecdotes my uncles or aunts would tell. These were tales about how they grew up in the Crocodile Farm, or a seaside barrio called Marintoc, and about the relatives who spiced up life in an otherwise uneventful barrio. I had heard them all before, but like a kid who wants to hear the same bedtime story every night, I eagerly listened to these family anecdotes.

After dinner I went out to the terrace to enjoy the fresh air, a luxury I couldn't have in polluted Manila. Except for the stars and the pale moon above, it was dark all around me. Not a single house was lighted, except for ours, and only in the dining room where someone was reading the papers late.

I wondered why people slept unusually early. I remembered that some years back, whenever I spent my summers in Banadero, people were out in the streets after dinner. Children played *patintero* when the moon was full, using water as markers on the road. Young men sang "Si Haring Solomon, may alagang pagong..." while some joined the *patintero*, hoping they would get the chance to "accidentally" tag Pinay, the *dalagita* who, because of her ample bosom, was always catching the young boys' eyes. Young ladies demurely listened to sweet words their suitors whispered, in the shadow of trees bathed by moonlight. This was the routine before.

Suddenly I was pulled out of my reverie. My aunt told me to go inside as she was ready to lock the door. I asked her why things had changed.

"These are frightening times," she said. "We must leave the lights outside open."

I asked her if it was because of *asuwangs.* She began to talk in a whisper, and when we were finally upstairs and ready to sleep, I began to understand. That night, when I heard the barking of dogs, I prayed an *asuwang* would not come.

These *asuwangs* were indeed to be feared. They carried M-16s and Magnums and .45-caliber pistols. They craved cold cash like a vampire craved hot blood. They coveted land like flesh-eaters coveted human bodies. Once they dwelt in the mountains as guardian angels of a pure cause. But some, like Lucifer, fell from grace, and they were inflicting pain and tormenting innocent folks. People feared them so much that they slept early and made sure their doors were locked. No one dared speak of them above a whisper or refused to give whatever they asked. It did not matter to these *asuwangs* if people's cheeks were getting thinner, so long as theirs were fat and plump. They were smug with the power that guns gave them.

My family was not immune to the *asuwangs*. One of them, a man whom my grandparents did not know or owed anything from, asked for two shirts and a pair of jeans one day. It was understood that they would not disappoint him. Whispers had been heard about what happened to those who refused to cooperate. One unhappy guy was said to have been tied to a tree and told he would be buried alive. My grandparents complied.

But once this bloodsucking started, it didn't stop. Soon the man was demanding not just a pair of jeans or a few personal necessities, but a share of the copra my grandfather got from his piece of land in another barrio. He said that if my *Lolo* didn't comply, they would simply get all the produce from his land. Nothing would be left to him, who had labored to buy the land.

Who knew what they would ask for next? The house? I suddenly felt sad at the thought of giving up those dinners.

Now I am back in the city, thinking about the *asuwangs*, thinking about how my family in Banadero is helpless in the face of brute force and intimidation. I am young and without power or influence to change what is happening, so how can I stop the depredations of these *asuwangs*? Perhaps we can pray that those angels who stand by the cause will help drive the evil spirits. When they do, then children will again be playing *patintero*, young men will be singing "Si Haring Solomon," and people will be going out at night when the moon is full, with no fear in their hearts.

Surviving my twenties

ONE early summer evening when I was 13, my grandmother called out to me from her house, in a stern voice, "Maia! Get in here, quick!"

When I did, she scolded me for staying out after the sun had set and the women were through sweeping their yards. "Do you want to give those boys a chance to touch ?" she demanded.

"No, *Lola*, I was just talking with my friends," I protested.

"*Ay naku*," she retorted. "You're just on your way to the river, but I'm already on my way back."

I guess my grandmother had reasons to worry. I was at that stage when some parts of my body were growing in awkward ways, and boys my age were starting to feel their hormones raging. She wanted to make sure I was all in one piece, when I returned to my mother in Manila.

Now, 12 years later, my much thinner and milder grandmother keeps telling me, "Maia, *pangga*, go out there quick!" In her youth, girls who remained unmarried at 25 were called old maids, and now she is worried that boys may not get near me at all. Quite often on her most recent visit, she would stroke my hair and ask in a whisper, "So, when are we getting married?"

That question is like the lid on a jar containing my pickled youth. I have heard it asked often enough to know that I have turned a corner in my life. I am now on Twentysomething Street, a busy place filled with worries about making it in the urban jungle, finding a mate, surviving on a few pesos, a diminishing number of true friends, lost innocence, sharpened instincts and, most of all, the realization that the good, old, sheltered days are over. A "changing of the guards," my mother said to me once. It's now my turn to sweat it out.

Fortunately, life is in no great hurry. I was initiated by installment. The first was the disappearance of my allowance. The second was the first few months in my first "real" job. A "real" job, I quickly realized, wasn't all that grand like I used to think when I was in school. It payed less than the freelance stuff I did at home, because there were "real" taxes, "real" expenses like bus or taxi fare and lunch and *merienda.* And I found out that what mattered most in my job is feasibility, not creativity.

The last installment came in the form of a phone call from a friend. "Are you free Friday?" she asked. It was Wednesday and I was busy, so I told her I couldn't go out.

"No, you have to," she said. "Go to the City Hall at 4 p.m."

"Why? Are you paying taxes or something?"

"I'm getting married."

"Ha! You are such a joker."

"I'm serious."

Now I'm a *ninang*.

The first three years after graduation I was like a fish out of water. Now I've mutated into a geek of sorts facing the computer monitor every day.

Funny how things turn out. Instead of finding the job I wanted, it found me. There are few other things I discovered: I am not special and unique like I used to think. Like everyone else, I have pretensions, hang-ups, moments of uncertainty. I'm just surviving my twenties.

Maia Kristine N. Hermosa, 25, is a fine arts graduate of the University of the Philippines and works as an editor and art director of www.femalenetwork.com.

Notice to Youngblood contributors

Contributors to Youngblood who haven't received their checks are requested to inquire with the PDI cashier on Friday.

In praise of praise

PINOY KASI

Michael L. Tan

WHEN it comes to child-rearing, Asians are generally stingy with praise. "*Puwera usug!*" (or, in the Visayas, "*Puwera buyag*"), Filipino parents cry out when you praise a child. The reason, they say, is that the child might come down with an illness afterward.

We grow up still fearing this *usug*, so that even among adults, any compliment is promptly dismissed with this "*Puwera usug*," lest you come down with stomach pains later.

It's hard to trace the exact origins of these beliefs, which you find in many parts of the world, but I suspect that in situations with high child death rates, parents generally don't want too much attention focused on the child. Praise may draw the attention of envious spirits, or human beings and invite harm.

There is, too, a notion that praise may spoil a child. Especially in agrarian societies, the goal of child-rearing is to instill a communitarian spirit, rather than individualism. Thus, children are always reminded that whatever honor or shame they reap goes to the family or community rather than to the individual.

In contrast, Western psychologists say praise is an integral part of positive parenting. Praise works on simple behavioral principles; you reinforce a child's good behavior by rewarding him or her with praise. Notice that in our society, we do use behaviorist principles but in a negative way: we withhold praise and yet are excessive in punishing bad behavior, emphasizing the terrible shame brought to the family or the community.

There are many contradictions between Filipino traditional norms and the demands of the times. On one hand, we don't want children to be too individualistic, yet we succumb to the growing demands of modern society for individual accomplishments and the "honor" it brings to the family. The irony then is that while we continue to withhold praise, we are too quick to put down a child if they don't excel in school.

It's interesting that in the United States, there's growing concern now that children receive too much praise. I'm not surprised since Americans do tend to go overboard with praise. I'm always reminding Filipino colleagues not to take Americans (and Americanized Filipinos) too seriously when they burst out with their superlatives such as, "That was great!" and "Oh my, this is fabulous!" The more staid Europeans generally raise their eyebrows when they hear such outbursts from Americans, dished out every few seconds, because they feel the excessive ebullience tends to trivialize the praise.

Alfie Kohn, author of "Hooked on Praise," cites studies showing that kids who get too much praise run risks of becoming "praise junkies," their lives focused on doing things to get that praise. Such kids may even end up less self-confident, unwilling to take risks because it might mean doing a poor job and losing praise. Praise junkies have also been found to be less willing to share ideas because that would mean sharing praise when it comes.

Praise should be part of child-rearing but shouldn't be the centerpiece. If we go back to using behaviorist theory, praise should be there to reinforce positive behavior but when you overdo this, you soon reach the point of extinction, where the praise is no longer effective. Besides, kids are not experimental mice or dogs being trained to perform tricks through a system of rewards.

Antonio Bandura, another psychologist, proposes an alternative where people learn to do something because they obtain personal satisfaction from doing it. This satisfaction need not be tied to an expectation of praise or rewards. We do it because we enjoy doing it. Taken to a higher level, we need to teach children to do things because it's the right thing to do. One Canadian study found that children praised for generous acts tended, ironically, to be less generous later in life because they gave only when they knew there would be praise coming afterwards. We need to teach children that it's good to be generous not because it gets you into heaven or that it gets your picture into newspapers, but because, quite simply, it's the ethical thing to do.

One last observation about praise. It's ironic that in Asia, while we deprive children of praise, we're expected to heap so much of adulation on older people, especially those who are celebrities or in power. That can be disastrous. We end up with politicians who were probably praise-deprived as children and who now can't have enough of it. KSP isn't just *kulang sa pansin*, but *kulang sa pugay*. I suspect we're governed by such creatures: individuals who surround themselves with people who do nothing but zap them with endless doses of sycophantic praise. Eventually they lose with reality, believing their own praise releases and clinging to memories of landslide election victories. It happened with Marcos. It's happening with Erap.

* * *

Comments can be sent to miguel@pinoykasi.org

Mendiola march sent Estrada packing

LETTERS

VARIOUS versions of the successful People Power II have been presented by personalities of different persuasions, but the significance of the march on Mendiola, which was intended to lay siege on the Malacañang Palace itself, cannot be overemphasized.

The extent of the people's heightened awareness and outrage over President Joseph Estrada's continued hold on power was translated into the mass that swelled at Edsa. The only sensible next step was to direct the people's indignation toward the seat of power in Malacañang, and boot Estrada out of office.

Containing the people in Edsa on account of unfounded worries of fomenting violence was nothing but shortsightedness and bias against militant organizations that truly have been potent and formidable pillars in toppling Estrada. It was in fact the militant groups that started the oust Estrada campaign in 1999.

More than the last-minute defection of Estrada's supporters in government and that of the military, it was the historic march on Mendiola, sweeping thousands upon thousands of righteously angry people to Malacañang that forced Estrada and family to suddenly flee and drop the extended five-day stay in the Palace.

The God of history and justice may not be kind to those who would try to downplay the people's invaluable effort in making People Power II happen.—**REV. FR. JOSE P. DIZON, convenor, Kairos Philippines, 172 West Riverside St., San Francisco del Monte, Quezon City**

Former CDC head belies raps

WITH reference to the article last Jan. 30, titled "Politicians not welcome among Clark employees," allow me to pass on this piece of information to set the record straight and more importantly in the name of balanced and fair reporting and justice.

The positions of president and chief executive officer of Clark Development Corp. (CDC) and Clark International Airport Corp. (CIAC) are two of the most coveted positions. Though initially I did not aspire for these positions as I was and still am preoccupied with my private endeavor, I was convinced by well-meaning friends and local leaders in Central Luzon to try public service. In my desire to be of service, especially to my province, I signified my intention to join the CDC and luck was on my side when on Feb. 1, 2000 I was appointed president and chief executive officer of CDC and CIAC. However, even before my appointment, some quarters who were interested in the positions started to attack me and resorted to all sorts of dirty tricks.

Among my top priorities when I assumed my post were the eradication of graft and corruption, streamlining the bureaucracy, minimizing red tape, etc. To my mind with these innovations, more investors would be encouraged to invest, which is the primary concern of the office.

With proper authority given on Feb. 23, 2000 by President Estrada, initial steps toward a revamp were undertaken with EVP Hilena Timbol Roman as the official in charge as she had been with CDC for quite some time and knew the personnel involved. However, even before we could start the revamp, Roman made a radical turn in favor of erring CDC personnel, making matters more complicated.

Despite this, I pursued the plan and was able to identify problem areas or graft-ridden areas and the persons involved. To comply with due process, investigations were conducted and those involved were given the opportunity to air their side. This move sent the message loud and clear that I meant business.

Locators and investors can attest to this. Proof is a letter dated July 13, 2000 of Clark Investors and Locators Association (CILA) addressed to then President Estrada.

Labor unrest was likewise arrested as evidenced by a letter of Yokohama Tire Philippines Inc. dated May 16, 2000.

Modesty aside, during my short tenure the CDC was able to attract around P2.6 billion worth of foreign investments from Vivendi Water Co., Fontana Corp., Digitel, Eastern Telecom, Geologistics Inc., Globe Telecom, Kyowa Sonic Co. Ltd. and Shinei Sangyo Co. Ltd., as well as direct investments worth P800 million by SMK Electronics and Phil. Shin-Ei. Over 4,500 new jobs were generated, graft and corruption was minimized and smugglers were apprehended resulting in an increase in revenue collection.

With the above accomplishments, the highly funded syndicates operating in the CDC had hard time pursuing their illegal activities. They persisted in publishing misleading, fabricated and false reports about the CDC and my administration.

As regards the Mimosa issue, let me say that I was not privy to the original agreement, particularly the rental rate, as it was a product of a compromise agreement approved by the Supreme Court. Even while I was president and CEO of CDC, BCDA chair Rogelio Singson, for reasons only known to him, excluded me from the negotiations between Mimosa and Penta Group. However, I approved the transfer of the contract from Robin Tan of Fontana to RN Development Corp. setting a higher rental that allowed the CDC to earn almost P200 million more, contrary to Antonio Gonzalez's claim.

CDC records belie all allegations of incompetence. Further, the number of investors and locators that came in during my tenure proves how well the CDC was managed.

It is high time to consider the concerns of the investors, particularly the three biggest investors: Yokohama, Kita and Sampo. I have been informed that they plan to pull out their investments due to labor problems, graft and corruption and insensitivity of the officials of CDC to their needs.

It is hoped that accusations against my administration as CDC president and CEO will be treated with extreme caution and fairness.—**SERGIO T. NAGUIAT JR.**

SBMA not hiding anything

THIS is in connection with the article titled, "Subic exec sued for slay attempt," published last Feb. 6.

Your reporter said that her request "to see the resignation letter (of lawyer Michael Musngi, former head of the Subic Bay Metropolitan Authority Ecology Center) or the purported memorandum of (SBMA Chair Felicito Payumo) on the resignation and the designation of an officer in charge to head the ecology department, was not granted."

This may be a small detail, but it gives the wrong impression that the SBMA is hiding something. The truth is, Payumo's memorandum on the designation of an officer in charge was released to all SBMA departments in the morning of Feb. 2, the day after Musngi resigned, and hence could be easily accessed from several sources.

Your reporter could have easily obtained copies of these documents since she knows the terrain in Subic, having worked as head of the Public Affairs Office during the previous SBMA administration.—**AMETHYA DELA LLANA, officer-in-charge, Ecology Center, Building 157, Bonifacio St., Subic Bay Freeport Zone**

Dump garbage in the deep sea

SELECT a suitable area along the southern shores of Manila Bay where the raw garbage can be hauled by trucks. Build a baling plant there. As soon as the garbage reaches the place, it should be compressed into bundles of about 500 kilos each, weighted with rocks if necessary. Make sure the bundles are wrapped in strong plastic or any other suitable material and bound securely by steel wires or metal strips.

Load the bales on barges which will take them to about a hundred kilometers east of Luzon. Dump the load there where the ocean is reputed to be three or more kilometers deep. At that depth the baled garbage cannot do any harm to any living creature, including fish. Needless to say, the ocean bottom can accommodate an almost unlimited amount of Metro Manila's foul refuse.

Incineration, with its atmosphere-polluting effect, should be ruled out.

The estimated cost of the bale-and-dump operation should compare favorably with the present inefficient, environmentally polluting, and crisis-generating system of garbage disposal.

Furthermore, the proposal should put an end to the inhuman practice by government of dumping tons of garbage on selected towns or other inhabited areas where the poor thrive or are sometimes buried alive in garbage.—**F.C. STA. MARIA, UP Village, Quezon City**

Shut out of anti-pedophile conference

THE FIVE-DAY "Crimes against Children" conference during Valentine's Day week was great. It drew the participation of the US Federal Bureau of Investigation, the Department of Justice and the Australian Federal Police. A Philippine group called Sun For All Children, which had successfully gotten an American pervert, James Byron Tivnan, convicted, although he is free somewhere, was not invited. Fr. Shay Cullen's child protection group that has put pedophiles in prison and is the best private prosecution in that aspect was not invited! Despite my success against pedophiles, I was not invited! And yet, the conference was about catching pedophiles.

But one Australian government-financed private group was invited. Only one group from the Philippines was invited and that is a money-raising group that lives off the back of abused children in order to get overseas trips!—**EARL K. WILKINSON, Makati City**

Extraordinary solution to extraordinary problem

ACCORDING to Rene Saguisag, Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo is merely the acting President. Joseph Estrada did not resign but was driven out by an angry mob consisting of a few thousand individuals.

The 50,000 demonstrators who marched to the gates of Malacañang did not constitute a mob. They were new patriots ready to depose a scoundrel of a president.

Saguisag failed to consider the multiplier effect of time. Hundreds of thousand at Edsa, coming and going, at any given time over a period of 80 hours easily translates into millions. Consider now the heroes of 1896. Did they comprise the majority?

Extraordinary times call for extraordinary solutions. Ms Macapagal became President through an extra-constitutional process, brought about by a deep distrust in the leadership, compounded by the infamous vote of 11 senators.—**SK JESUS P. CARREON, 18 Isabela St., Bago Bantay, Quezon City**

Put government TV to better use

IN OTHER countries, state television exists to provide informative and educational programming. It is only here in the Philippines where half of the time government TV channels offer nothing but home TV shopping, variety shows, soap operas and other stupid spectacles. Taxpayers' money should never be used to subsidize such mediocrity!

If Channels 4, 9 and 13 have neither the initiative nor the creative inclination to produce good programs that contribute something to nation-building, then President Macapagal should immediately replace the management of these TV stations with competent people who can do the job. The country needs to produce more TV programs that focus on Philippine history and culture, science and technology, environmental protection and disaster preparedness. Instead of importing Mexican telenovelas, a daily series of the National Geographic Documentaries should be shown.

If all those political candidates who claim to favor improving education are sincere, let us hear them promise that once they are elected, they will enact measures to reward the commercial sponsors of educational TV with sizable tax breaks. A the same time a bill should be passed imposing taxes on commercial advertisements aired during such mindless TV shows as the WWF (so-called pro-wrestling), MTV, etc. for the mental atrophy they cause among TV viewers.

Let us also bring back live TV coverage of the proceedings in the Senate, the House of Representatives and the Supreme Court to prevent criminal political forces from ever returning to power.—**REY K. LIRIOS, 362 Gen. Ordoñez St., Marikina City**

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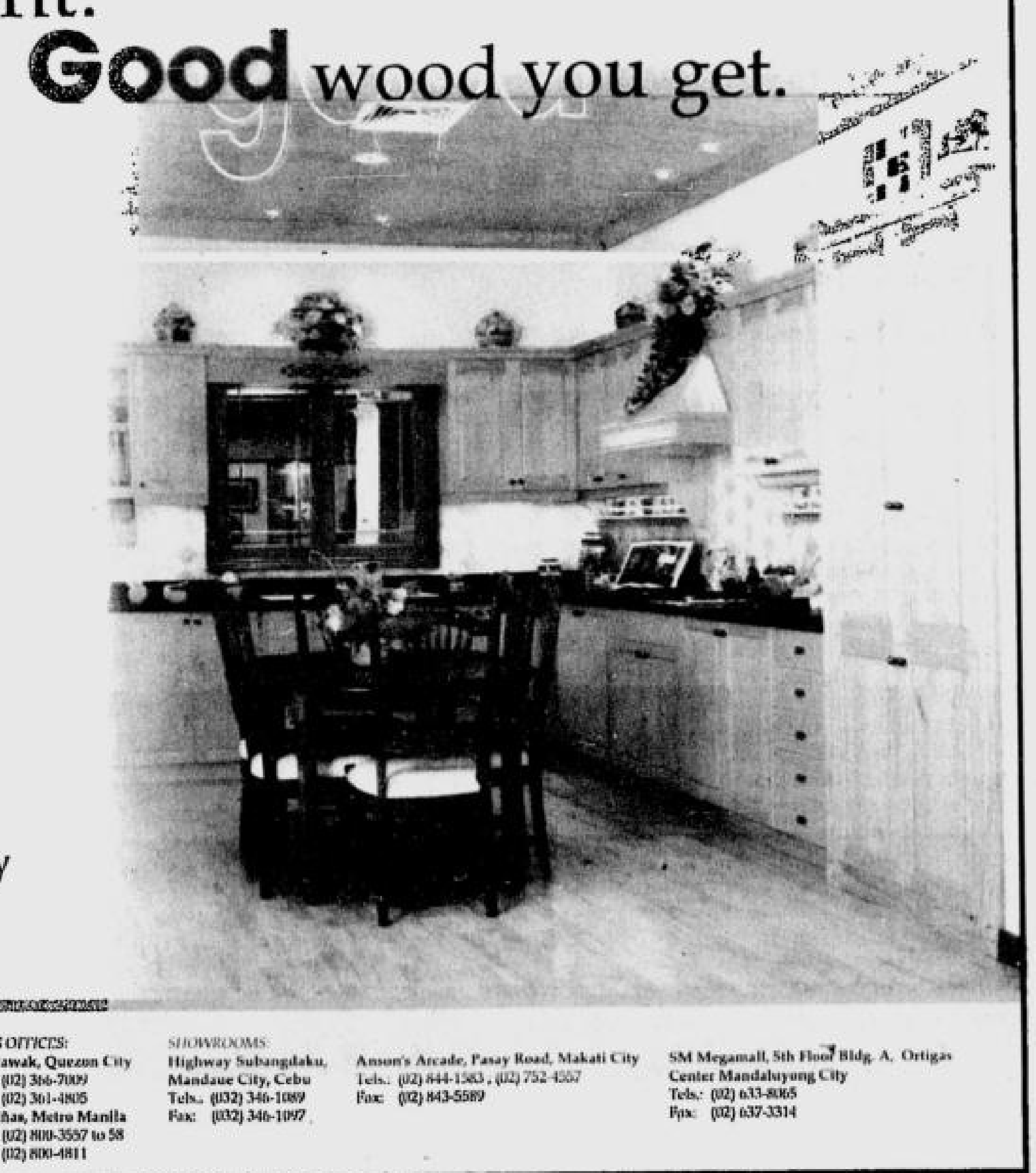

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The WORLD

MARGOT J. BATERINA, Editor

BORNEO MASSACRE

Dayaks broaden campaign of terror

PALANGKARAYA, Indonesia—Armed gangs of indigenous Dayaks yesterday broadened their campaign of terror on Indonesia's Borneo Island, forcing thousands of minority Madurese to flee the slaughter.

"The communal conflict could move to more remote areas that are difficult to reach," Indonesia's top security minister Susilo Bambang Yudhoyono said. "Action will be taken to prevent it spreading."

Dayak men, armed with spears and machetes and chanting "War, War!" hunted settlers from the island of Madura hiding in forests, while continuing to besiege about 15,000 refugees sheltering in squalid camps and waiting for the government to evacuate them.

The violence spread to Central Kalimantan's provincial capital Palangkaraya as Dayaks burned dozens of houses and businesses belonging to settlers, many of whom sought shelter at a local police station.

The Dayaks set up road blocks throughout the city, burning tires and threatening motorists with homemade weapons as they searched passing vehicles for Madurese, whom they threatened to kill.

Indonesia's outnumbered security forces, who have been condemned in the past week for doing too little to stop the bloodshed, were making no attempts to control the situation on Palangkaraya's streets.

Although two battalions of troops and paramilitary police—numbering about 1,300 men—had already arrived, new reinforcements were on their way, Yudhoyono told reporters. Another Army battalion was on its way to Palangkaraya, he said.

Yudhoyono reiterated that the campaign of ethnic cleansing would end within three days.

However, that was too long for many Madurese who fled by road to the city of Banjarmasin in the neighboring Southern Kalimantan province, hoping that the bloodshed would not spread there.

Government officials said the body count from eight days of killings stood at 270—nearly all Madurese. However, they said the death toll could be as high as 1,000 as uncounted bodies lay rotting in houses and fields.

"Any Madurese who stay in this province will be killed," said Dayak fighter Azan Tein. "We have had enough of them. They rape our women. They do not respect our culture. Either they leave or die. Central Kalimantan must be for Dayaks only."

Over 100,000 Madurese were resettled to Indonesia's half of Borneo Island as part of a transmigration program that lasted from the 1960's until last year. The effort was intended to relieve overcrowding on Madura.

However, the program sparked widespread condemnation and the government was accused of ignoring local cultures.

The Dayaks claim the immigrants pushed them off their traditional lands and stole their jobs in the island's gold, tin and copper mines. They also complain of receiving inferior education. *AP*

AN INDONESIAN official surveys the area of a massacre, which included decapitated victims in Sampit on the island of Borneo, Feb. 25. Up to 400 people have died in a week of ethnic bloodshed.

REUTERS

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Nokor elderly hold reunion in Seoul

SEOUL—Smiling and clapping, 100 elderly people from North Korea yesterday flew into South Korea for three days of reunions with relatives whom they have not seen since the 1950-53 Korean War.

A North Korean plane carrying the Northern visitors landed at Seoul's Kimpo International Airport after a one-hour flight that skirted the western coast of the divided Korean peninsula.

The plane was to fly back to North Korea later in the day with an equal number of visitors from South Korea for similar reunions in the North.

Hundreds of South Korean family members welcomed the Northern visitors at the airport, shouting and waving signs bearing their names. The visitors, most of them men, were neatly dressed in black overcoats and hats. They grinned and applauded.

The visitors were immediately taken by bus to a hotel for rest before the first meeting with relatives in the afternoon.

As at two similar reunions last year, this week's meetings will take place at hotels in Seoul and Pyongyang, the two Korean capitals. Travelers will not be allowed to visit the homes of their relatives.

On Monday, the visitors were scheduled to meet relatives as a group and attend a dinner hosted by the heads of the two countries' Red Cross societies. Two private meetings were scheduled Tuesday in hotel rooms.

The family reunions are a byproduct of a historic inter-Korea summit in June at which leaders of the two Koreas agreed to work toward reconciliation and national unification.

About 1.2 million North Koreans fled to South Korea during the Korean War. Thousands of South Koreans are also believed to have gone to the North, many conscripted into the North's Army.

The family reunions are a pressing issue because many elderly Koreans do not have long to live.

The South Korean visitors were selected from 120,000 candidates through a computer lottery. It was unknown how North Korea chose its visitors, but past Northern visitors included many luminaries believed to be loyal to their communist regime.

Discussion is under way between the two Koreas to set up a permanent meeting place for separated family members. *AP*

A SOUTH Korean woman displays a cake depicting the reunion of North and South Korean family members at a Seoul hotel, Feb. 26. The two Koreas are holding their third family reunions from Feb. 26 to 28. REUTERS

Americans risk selves in drug war

BOGOTA—Flying missions over guerrilla-infested coca fields or manning remote radar stations in the jungle, private American citizens are working perilously close to the front lines of the drug war in Colombia.

Referred to as "contractors" by the Washington agencies who hire them and "mercenaries" by critics, they are supposed to number no more than 300 at a time in the South American country.

Yet with the US government "outsourcing" much of its drug war aid to these contractors, officials are already indicating that the ceiling needs to be raised.

As Colombian President Andres Pastrana travels to Washington to meet with US President George W. Bush on Tuesday, worries are mounting about the danger the US contractors face—and whether their presence and that of US troops could lead to deeper involvement in Colombia's decades-old civil war.

Some of the riskiest jobs in a $1.3-billion US-financed counter-drug offensive have been contracted to companies including DynCorp, of Reston, Virginia, whose employees last weekend flew into a firefight involving leftist guerrillas to save the crew of a downed Colombian police helicopter.

The company provides rescuers, mechanics and helicopter and airplane pilots for aerial eradication missions over cocaine and heroin-producing plantations that are "taxed" and protected by the rebels.

Because they are kept away from the media, it is difficult to know whether DynCorp's employees live up to their image as a rowdy group of daredevils and combat veterans. Janet Wineriter, a DynCorp spokesperson, said that under terms of the company's contract with the State Department, she could not discuss DynCorp's operations in Colombia. *AP*

Hutu rebels attack Burundi gov't forces

BUJUMBURA—Hutu rebels launched a major offensive on Bujumbura in which at least 15 people died Sunday on the eve of a summit in Arusha intended to thrash out a list of people to lead a 30-month transition government in Burundi.

The offensive by the National Liberation Forces (FNL) followed a leadership crisis within the group between supporters of peace talks with the government and those who condemn any dialogue, who seemed to have gained the upper hand.

The rebels launched the assault on government forces late Saturday and rapidly seized control of the northeastern suburb of Kinama, witnesses who fled the fighting said.

All military positions in the predominantly-Hutu suburb of Kinama were occupied by rebels who gutted the area's main administrative office and set up their own headquarters, added the witnesses.

An AFP correspondent at the scene said government armored vehicles were attacking rebels positions on Sunday afternoon, though the suburb remained in rebel hands.

Five civilians died during the clashes and five soldiers were killed, witnesses said. Two other civilians were reported killed in the Ngagara area south of Kinama while witnesses said another three died in the eastern Cibitoke sector. *AFP*

Powell attends Kuwaiti victory rites

KUWAIT CITY—Moving along on a quick trip through the Middle East and the Persian Gulf, US Secretary of State Colin Powell yesterday met with Kuwaiti leaders and joined in celebrations of the successful US-led war over Iraq a decade ago.

Powell was due a receptive audience. Kuwait has felt the sting of Saddam Hussein and kept its distance from Arab sentiments against UN sanctions against Baghdad.

"This was a guy who invaded a country that was not doing anything to him," Powell said Sunday as he condemned the Iraqi leader as a dictator who has been stripped of his "stings" by the Gulf War and world pressure in the years afterward.

Powell is trying to persuade the Arabs to maintain UN sanctions on Iraq, but is running into complaints the Iraqi people are suffering as a result of the economic restraints.

His arguments are that Saddam is at fault and that only about 20 percent of Iraq's oil revenue is used to help the Iraqi people.

From Kuwait, Powell takes his case to Saudi Arabia and then to Syria, where he is likely to look into reports Syria is helping Iraq transport oil illegally.

On Sunday, Powell endorsed a Palestinian demand by urging Israel to lift an economic "siege" of the West Bank and Gaza as soon as possible.

The constraints, which include a ban on Palestinian workers going to their jobs in Israel and the withholding of tax revenues, do nothing to improve the security situation, Powell said after a two-hour meeting with Yasser Arafat at his headquarters.

"If people are not able to get to their jobs, they become more frustrated," Powell said. "Frustration leads to anger and then anger to violence."

Israel, in an effort to stem attacks on its soldiers and civilians, is using economic pressure as well as firepower. Peace talks have been shelved, and Powell said it would be a long time before they resume.

"We discussed how it is necessary for all sides to move away from violence and incitement and how it is necessary to lift the siege as soon as possible so that economic activity can begin again in the region," Powell said of his meeting with Arafat. *AP*

OFFICIALS from Britain' ministry of agriculture begin to prepare slaughtered pigs and cows for the incinerator at a farm near Heddon on the Wall, northern England, Feb. 25, after an outbreak of foot-and-mouth disease was discovered there. REUTERS

Britain gripped by foot-and-mouth disease

LONDON—The foot-and-mouth outbreak gripping Britain spread across the country on Sunday with the confirmation of a seventh outbreak in the southwest, authorities said.

The discovery on a farm in the English county of Devon, has killed government hopes that—with no new cases reported in the previous 24 hours—it was on top of the crisis.

And with all the signs suggesting that the worst is yet to come, the government's chief veterinary officer Jim Scudamore said that he was fairly certain that the Devon farm had exported sheep to the rest of Europe.

"It is a very worrying situation and very serious," Scudamore said, in sharp contrast to his insistance on Saturday that the government thought it had contained the crisis.

British Agriculture Minister Nick Brown said he had warned the European Commission of the risk that infected animals might already have been exported to the continent.

Tests being conducted should prove by Monday or Tuesday how long the farm at Highampton had been infected.

The farm has over 2,000 livestock spread over 13 sites in Devon and neighboring Cornwall—all of which have been put under quarantine.

So far the disease has only been found at the farm's Highampton site, where 51 sheep are thought to be infected.

The discovery is the first recorded cases of the disease in sheep in the present crisis—all other cases being in pigs. However another suspected case of foot-and-mouth among sheep was detected at an abbatoir in Wales, Welsh assembly spokesperson Ruth Williams said.

The abbatoir in Gaerwen, Anglesey, has been closed down pending tests.

"There is a suspected case involving one sheep in Anglesey. The sheep is still alive but it has not yet been confirmed whether it has foot-and-mouth disease," Williams said.

The Devon farm has strong links with livestock in the northern county of Cumbria, provoking fears that the disease may have spread there too. *AFP*

More quakes forecast for Salvador

SAN SALVADOR—More tremors were felt in El Salvador Sunday, and experts warned the increasingly anxious inhabitants that faults beneath the earth's crust could remain active for some time.

This week's series of quakes and after-shocks were due to compressional stresses being released deep beneath the earth's crust in an area southwest of the capital, the environment ministry said in a statement.

A volcanologist at the ministry, Carlos Pullinger, said: "These tremors could go on for months. There have been cases (in other countries) where they continued for up to a year."

Early Sunday, a series of five tremors measuring from 2.9 to 4.6 on the Richter scale caused more alarm in the center of the country. No casualties were reported.

They followed a quake Saturday, measured at 4.2 to 5.0 Richter, and a quake Friday, also of 4.2 Richter.

After two major earthquakes hit the country on Jan. 13 and a month later on Feb. 13, measuring 7.5 and 6.1 Richter respectively. They killed more than 1,100 people and left some 1.3 million homeless. *AFP*

HIV virus hits 12,000 PNG residents

PORT MORESBY—An HIV epidemic is sweeping through Papua New Guinea, with up to 12,000 people infected by the virus in the last six months, according to the United Nations.

Between 10,000 and 15,000 people in Papua New Guinea are estimated to have HIV, which leads to the deadly disease AIDS. A UN fact-finding team said until six months ago there were just 3,145 reported HIV cases, of which 236 cases later died of AIDS.

"This is a very serious epidemic and the evidence is that the number of people infected with HIV is increasing every year," said UN team member Dr Wiwat Rojanapithayakorn after inspecting hospitals during the weekend.

Wiwat said the number of infected people was equally split between men and women. There was also a growing number of babies testing positive for the virus, which can be transmitted from an infected mother to her unborn child. *AP*

LITERATURE TO GO

Vending machines offer classic poems on London's subway

LONDON—On the teeming platform at South Kensington Underground station, vending machines offer a choice of a chocolate bar, a pack of gum—or classic love poems.

The slim, map-sized poetry volume, which sells for $1.45, is the work of Travelman, a publisher determined to bring quality literature to the huddled masses on London's subway system.

The only problem is finding a working machine.

Three machines were installed at the station, in the heart of the city's museum district, in December. Two months later, one is jammed, another cannot be found.

"We may have shut it down. It was really badly located," said Travelman's marketing director, William Mollett.

The third machine dutifully swallows a scoin and dispenses a mini-anthology of verses by Sappho, Shakespeare and many authors in between.

The poetry collection went on sale for Valentine's Day, but Travelman's staple is short fiction. Company founder Alexander Waugh, grandson of satirist Evelyn Waugh, dreamed of producing individual stories on a single folding sheet for space-strapped commuters.

Over the last three years, Waugh and his collaborators, Mollett and Ned Guinness, Earl of Iveagh and heir to the Guinness brewery fortune, have published 42 titles.

Drawing on Waugh's literary connections—his late father Auberon Waugh edited the Literary Review and wrote for the satirical magazine Private Eye—Travelman has assembled a heavyweight editorial panel that includes the writers Martin Amis, Beryl Bainbridge and Muriel Spark.

The imprint's crisply printed leaflets, color-coded into series that include romance, crime and adventure, focus on classy and classic authors such as Arthur Conan Doyle, P.G. Wodehouse, Graham Greene and (naturally) Evelyn Waugh.

"We're unashamedly setting out to make people feel reading these stories will be an improving experience," said Waugh.

The stories were sold initially at bookstore checkout counters and railway station newsstands. Realizing the dream of literature from a machine has been a struggle.

Commercial vending machines were developed in 19th century to sell chewing gum, and now market everything from cigarettes to live bait. In Tokyo, the world's automated-vending capital, machines sell everything from beer to CDs to packets of rice.

But book-vending machines are problematic, as Travelman is discovering.

First there's the machine itself, adapted from a Post Office stamp-vending machine. Slim, 1.2 meters tall and painted a discreet green and cream, it is overshadowed by the garish chocolate machines nearby.

And it can only display a single title, which is changed about once a week.

"You need to have three titles so people can make a choice," Mollett concedes. "I've never come across a vending machine that didn't give you a choice—unless it's selling stamps."

Londoners are accustomed to a touch of culture with their public transit. Since 1986, London Underground has posted poems inside subway trains, compiling them in a series of "Poems on the Underground" books.

Those poems have a captive audience. On South Kensington's busy platform, few of the commuters and tourists notice the machine displaying a purple pamphlet with a pink heart.

"I would have thought that people would be too squeezed, there's too much rumpus on the Tube," said 37-year-old Hans Christiansen, a Parisian visiting London on business.

"I think the idea of short stories is a good one," said Linda Salmon, visiting London from Devon in southwest England. "But that heart doesn't appeal to me in the slightest. It makes it look like a condom machine."

Undaunted, Travelman has applied to install machines at 30 more sites on the Underground, and hopes to have 50 up and running by the end of the year.

"If the Underground can give us enough sites at a good cost, it'll work," Mollett said. "So far we've only had five jams and sold 1,000 copies." *AP*

THE DAILY GOSPEL

Tuesday, February 27, 2001
8th Week in Ordinary Time

1st Reading: **Sir 35:1-12**
Gospel: **Mk 10:28-31**

Peter spoke up and said, "We have given up everything to follow you." Jesus answered, "Truly, there is no one who has left house or brothers or sisters, or father or mother, or children, or lands for my sake and for the Gospel, who will not receive his reward. I say to you: even in the midst of persecution he will receive a hundred times as many houses, brothers, sisters, mothers, children, and lands in the present time and in the world to come eternal life. Do pay attention: Many who now are first will be last, and the last, first."

Commentary

"Brother Sun, Sister Moon" is a film about the life of St. Francis of Asisi. It has a scene of Francis disrobing in public, after being disowned by his father for giving away goods that belonged to his family. He walks away naked but with eyes brimming with happiness like he was never richer in his whole life. While onlookers were pitying him for the inheritance he had lost, those who knew Francis better were secretly happy for Francis and for the indescribable wealth he felt he had acquired. Even the sun and the moon became his instant relatives, as well as the wind and the air, the birds and the trees. The charismatic song entitled Give Thanks captures the spirit of Francis which is what today's Gospel is about: And now, let the weak say I am strong, let the poor say I am rich, because of what the Lord has done for us...

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SUPREME COURT DOCTRINES

REMEDIAL LAW (EVIDENCE)—Sufficient evidence—Sufficient evidence for purposes of frustrating a demurrer thereto is such evidence in character, weight, or amount, as will legally justify the judicial or official action demanded according to the circumstances. To be considered sufficient, therefore, the evidence must prove: (a) the commission of the crime, and (b) the precise degree of participation therein by the accused. In the instant case, the prosecution miserably failed to establish by sufficient evidence the existence of the crime of *estafa* and other deceit. [Citations omitted.] [Justice Melo, Third Division, Ong v. People, G.R. No. 140904, October 9, 2000]

DIGEST BY R.B. VERA

Across the NATION

TONY BERGONIA, Assistant Editor

Negros communist rebels wage war on Danding bets

WEATHER FORECAST

FORECAST: Northeastern Luzon and the Eastern sections of Visayas and Mindanao will be mostly cloudy with scattered rainshowers and isolated thunderstorms. The rest of the country will be partly cloudy to at times cloudy with isolated rainshowers or thunderstorms.

SOURCE: **PAGASA**

Metro Manila HI 32° Lo 22°	**Baguio** HI 25° Lo 15°	**Tuguegarao** HI 29° Lo 21°	**Laoag** HI 32° Lo 22°
Clark Zone HI 32° Lo 22°	**Tagaytay** HI 31° Lo 21°	**Legazpi** HI 32° Lo 24°	**Calapan** HI 32° Lo 24°
Bacolod HI 32° Lo 24°	**Roxas** HI 32° Lo 25°	**Cebu** HI 32° Lo 25°	**Tacloban** HI 32° Lo 24°
Gen. Santos HI 32° Lo 23°	**Zamboanga** HI 33° Lo 24°	**Cagayan de Oro** HI 33° Lo 23°	**Davao** HI 33° Lo 24°

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By Carla Gomez
PDI Visayas Bureau

BACOLOD CITY—The Communist Party of the Philippines-New People's Army (CPP-NPA) on Negros Island has vowed to campaign against candidates being supported by businessman Eduardo "Danding" Cojuangco.

Frank Fernandez, CPP-NPA leader on the island, said in a statement that their campaign would be "armed and unarmed" and "legal and illegal" and aimed at "destroying the power of Cojuangco and his cohorts in Negros."

It was not, however, explained in the statement how the mainstream communist group would carry out its campaign against candidates being supported by Cojuangco, a former associate of the late dictator Ferdinand Marcos.

Fernandez said they decided to launch the campaign because, he claimed, Cojuangco would cheat during the May 14 elections to ensure the victory of candidates being backed by the United Negros Alliance (UNA) and the Nationalist People's Coalition (NPC), political parties which Cojuangco formed.

Cojuangco is chair emeritus of NPC and is adviser of UNA, a local party.

Fernandez claimed that Cojuangco would pour "a big amount of money" and would use armed goons, including the breakaway Revolutionary Proletarian Army-Alex Boncayao Brigade (RPA-ABB), to make sure Cojuangco's candidates win.

In Negros Oriental, Fernandez said Cojuangco is supporting candidates of the Lapian ng Masang Pilipino (LAMP), which used to be the ruling coalition when Joseph Estrada, Cojuangco's close friend, was still president.

The INQUIRER tried to reach Cojuangco yesterday but to no avail.

During UNA's launching on Feb. 20, Cojuangco denied using the local party to "perpetuate" his interest in the province.

He had said UNA was a result of Negrenses' "clamor for a professional corps of leaders to lead and ensure a sound future for Negros in the new millennium."

Sagay Mayor Joseph Marañon, UNA's candidate for governor, brushed aside Fernandez's claim that Cojuangco planned to cheat in the elections.

"It's normal for people to campaign against (us) because it's election time," he said.

Fernandez also accused Cojuangco of using the RPA-ABB to protect cooperatives that serve the businessman's financial interests in Negros.

He claimed that Cojuangco, who is from Tarlac, wants to control agriculture-related and other business interest in Negros.

"The depth of the interest of Cojuangco in the whole country, some of which are in Negros Occidental, can be seen in his direct control (of) or connection (with) about 50 firms nationwide," Fernandez said in Ilonggo.

Carapali Lualhati, RPA-ABB commander, had denied that the breakaway rebels were being used as a private army by Cojuangco.

He maintained that his group would not be used by any politician in the province and would focus instead on its peacekeeping efforts in the province.

The RPA-ABB has been helping the police in arresting wanted persons in compliance with the provisions of the peace agreement signed on Dec. 10, 2000.

So far, the rejectionist group has arrested and turned over 16 persons with arrest warrants to local authorities since late last year.

The latest was Juniver Hulleza, a murder suspect, who was handed to policemen of Don Salvador Benedicto town on Feb. 13.

The RPA-ABB is the armed group of the Rebolusyonaryong Partido ng Manggagawa-Pilipinas that broke away from the mainstream CPP-NPA in the wake of widespread discontent over the leadership of Jose Ma. Sison, who is based in The Netherlands.

Cops in anti-NPA raid hurt 2 civilians

By Chito Fuentes
PDI Visayas Bureau

TAGBILARAN CITY--Two civilians were wounded yesterday when policemen raided a house where four suspected communist rebels spent the night in Barangay Bugho, Loon town, about 36 kilometers from here.

The victims were identified as Jose Riguya, 50 and the owner of the house, and Braulio Alyensa, 29, of Maribojoc town.

The police brought them to the province-ran Gov. Celestino Gallares Memorial Hospital in Tagbilaran for treatment.

Riguya told the INQUIRER that a group of three men and a woman slept in his house Saturday and Sunday night. The two men stayed while the two others left the house yesterday.

"I was afraid to inquire about them when they told me they were policemen of the people," he said in Cebuano.

At about 5 a.m. yesterday, Riguya said he had just completed the first mystery of the Holy Rosary when gunfire erupted.

Riguya, a farmer, was hit in his left leg. He said his three children were not harmed.

He, however, said he did not know who fired first—his visitors or the members of the 701st Provincial Mobile Group.

Alyensa also denied being a member of the underground group saying he was just a vendor of goods like ointments, perfumes and vitamins.

He said he only accompanied the lone female guerrilla, who gave her name as "Gingging," to Riguya's house on Sunday.

Alyensa said he decided to spend the night in the house and planned to leave early the next day so he could remit his sales to their office in Baclayon town.

An exchange of gunfire suddenly erupted. He was hit in the hands and the back. Like Riguya, he could not say who started the firing but could not recall any warning from the policemen.

Supt. Lani-o Nerez, Bohol PNP director, was unavailable for comment. He was in Loon to personally conduct an investigation of the raid.

It was the second insurgency-related incident in Bohol in just a week. On Feb. 19, two rebels were killed when elements of the 15th Scout Rangers raided a temporary rebel camp in Anda town.

Anti-'trapo' group starts 'Scarlet Letter' drive

OLONGAPO CITY—Cause-oriented groups in this city vowed to identify *trapos* (traditional politicians) with big, red letter Xs to discourage voters from supporting them during the May 14 elections.

Bonding under the movement "Wais na Botante (Smart Voters)," members of the Olongapo chapters of Sanlakas and the Partido ng Manggagawa (PM) said they will mark the posters of these *trapos* with the letter X.

"*Isang* broad point *na* Pentel Pen *o* marker *lang ang magiging katapat ng kanilang milyones—hindi kasing-mahal pero sing-epektibo* (Only a broad point Pentel Pen or marker would be their opponent—this not as costly but it is effective just the same)," said John Bayarong, Wais na Botante chief coordinator and PM representative, taking off from the slogan of the highly successful "Wais si Lumen" advertising campaign of a detergent powder brand.

Bayarong said the scarlet letter X will warn the public that a particular candidate is a *trapo* and hence should be shunned by the electorate.

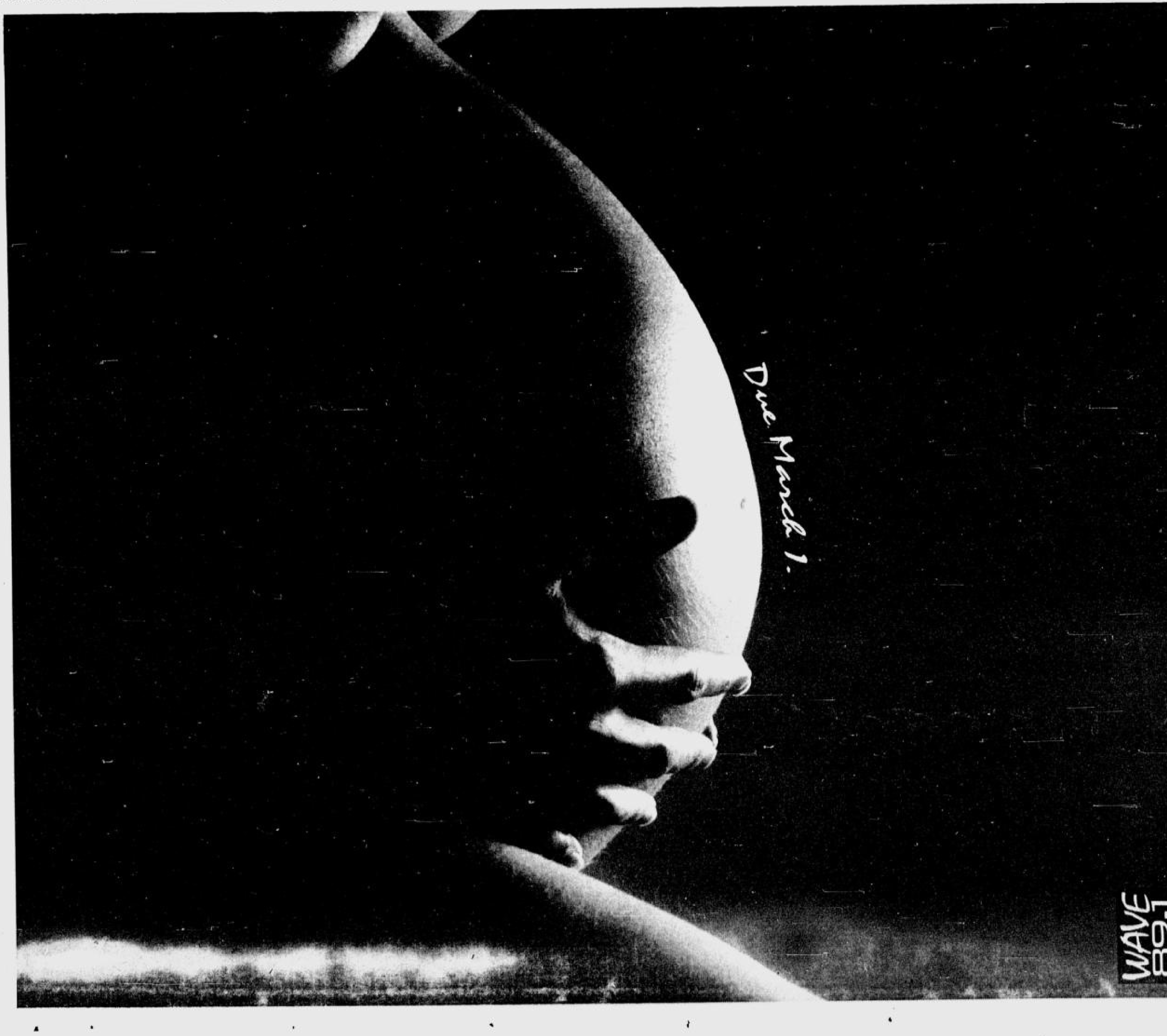
He defined a *trapo* as a politician who uses gold, goons and guns to ensure his election victory and to stay in power.

He said Wais na Botante is finalizing a "*trapo*-meter," a set of criteria which will serve as basis for determining if a candidate falls within the *trapo* category or not.

The group will form their "Trapo Police," who will cross out posters of traditional politicians with red markers.

Bayarong also appealed to voters to actively participate in the scarlet letter campaign against *trapos*.

"This is our call to our fellow citizens—mark with X all campaign materials of these *trapos* and send them a message that we will not be fooled again," he said in Filipino. *Elizabeth Marcelo, PDI Central Luzon Desk*



Iloilo journalists condemn strip search of PDI correspondent

By Nestor Burgos Jr.
PDI Visayas Bureau

ILOILO CITY—Members of the media here have closed ranks behind INQUIRER correspondent Ma. Diosa Labiste who was subjected to a strip search before she was allowed to interview an inmate at the Iloilo provincial jail.

In a joint statement, the Iloilo Press Club (IPC) and the National Union of Journalists in the Philippines (NUJP) in Iloilo also called on Gov. Arthur Defensor to conduct a thorough investigation of the incident involving Labiste, also managing editor of the Iloilo-based newspaper The Visayas Examiner.

Labiste, 35, went to the Iloilo Rehabilitation Center (IRC) at around 1:30 p.m. last Feb. 23 on an assignment by the INQUIRER to interview Iloilo's lone political detainee Reynaldo Bocala in connection with the hunger strike of political detainees.

Bocala, allegedly the deputy secretary of the Panay regional committee of the Communist Party of the Philippines when he was captured in a raid Feb. 12, was then holding a fast in sympathy with the nationwide hunger strike of political prisoners.

Jail policy

Labiste, who was accompanied by a female human rights worker, said the jail guards refused to allow her to interview Bocala until she subjected herself to a strip search even after she repeatedly showed her press identification card.

"After I had my bag inspected, I volunteered to be frisked instead but the guards were adamant, insisting that it (strip search) was the policy of the jail," she said.

Labiste and her companion were then taken to a private cubicle where a lone female guard told them to raise their shirts and lower their pants and underwear. "We were then told . . . to assume a squatting position for a few seconds."

If not for her story's deadline, she said she would have refused to be searched. "I felt uncomfortable and humiliated. I've never been subjected to such indignities in my more than 10 years as a journalist," Labiste said.

Jimmy Almendros, assistant provincial jail warden, said they were merely following a policy of Iloilo Governor Defensor to search women visitors for hidden illegal drugs and weapons that could be smuggled inside the jail.

Drug smuggling

"We implemented this policy after receiving reports that the jail has been made a drop-off point for drugs through the inmates," Almendros said.

In a radio interview, Defensor said the long-standing policy was implemented to prevent jailbreaks and riots after drugs and weapons were smuggled in by women visitors through their underwear. "This is applied to everybody, even the members of the media."

"We hope you understand that we are only after the safety of everybody, especially the visitors," he said.

The governor, however, clarified that only visitors who enter the cells of the inmates are subjected to a strip search.

Labiste said she interviewed Bocala through the iron bars of his cell that he shares with 22 other inmates, mostly accused of common crimes.

Limuel Celebria, NUJP-Iloilo chair, said that while they support moves to tighten security in the jail premises, "there must be other measures that do not violate a person's dignity." Both the NUJP and IPC asked Defensor to conduct a review of the policy.

No special treatment

Labiste said that while she was not asking for special treatment, she fears that the policy will deter women journalists from searching for news in the IRC.

Women's groups also condemned the policy. "If this can happen to a respected journalist like Ms Labiste, imagine what has been happening to other women visitors," said Lucy Francisco, Gabriela spokesperson.

Dance teacher nabbed for molesting 17 kids

By Romy Amarado
PDI Visayas Bureau

DUMAGUETE CITY—A dance instructor and suspected pedophile is now facing multiple criminal charges for allegedly molesting at least 17 minors, mostly elementary pupils of a public school here.

The suspect, Fred Bolongaita, who is in his 40s, is facing 17 counts of child abuse and child labor charges, according to Chief Insp. Rey Lyndon Lawas, officer in charge of the Dumaguete City police office.

Bolongaita, a resident of Silliman Avenue in this city, was arrested in a police entrapment in Barangay Tinago on Wednesday afternoon, Lawas said.

Lawas said Bolongaita was caught in the act of molesting a minor in the victim's residence in Tinago.

Quoting affidavits of the first three victims, Lawas said Bolongaita recruited good looking Grades 5 and 6 pupils aged 11 to 14 years old from a public school in the city to join dance contests in the different towns in Negros Oriental, especially during fiestas.

The victims claimed that Bolongaita would sexually molest them after the contest and would give them money. No amount was mentioned.

Lawas said Bolongaita was believed to have started molesting young boys since November last year.

Bolongaita's activity was discovered only recently when the school's principal and some teachers became suspicious because they noticed that his visits to the schools had become more frequent and that he would gather the better-looking male pupils for the supposed dance contests.

Last week, school authorities went to the police to ask for an investigation. It was only then that the police were able to get confirmation from the victims that they were indeed molested by Bolongaita.

Bolongaita was held last week for questioning but he refused to answer the charges. He was released pending preliminary investigation of the child abuse complaints filed with the city prosecutor's office in Dumaguete.

Lawas said the number of the victims could even be more than 17 because some of the victims disclosed that Bolongaita also preyed on first year high school students from the same school.

No evidence of private armies, says police chief

DIGOS CITY—The provincial police chief here said there is no evidence yet to support reports of the existence of alleged private armies being used by some politicians and political clans here.

Supt. Guillermo Lara, police provincial director said, "we are conducting (a) discreet investigation and so far we have not established the existence of any private army."

Reports received by the police as early as three weeks ago alleged that at least four mayors, three vice mayors and two political clans have hired armed civilians to help them win in the elections.

Among those mentioned were Digos Mayor Arsenio Latasa, Kiblawan Mayor Jaime Caminero, Vice Mayor Antonio Razonable of Padada and Don Marcelino Vice Mayor Patrick Mallari, son of slain General Santos City broadcaster Odillon Mallari.

The political clans alleged to be maintaining large numbers of armed followers are the Bautista and Lachica family of Malita and Jose Abad Santos towns, respectively.

But Lara said investigators only found police escorts securing these politicians.

"No armed civilians. Maybe, the reports were referring to the police escorts of these politicians, who are sometimes seen in civilian clothes," he said.

Latasa branded the report as "ridiculous," adding he has never employed goons. *Allan Nawal, PDI Mindanao Bureau*

VOLCANO WATCH

EDWIN BACASMAS

Life goes on for a boat-making business in Barangay Lidong, Albay despite tension caused by the continuing restiveness of Mayon Volcano.

Election violence looms over Davao Sur, says candidate

DIGOS CITY—The probability of election violence erupting in some areas of Davao del Sur is very high because of intense political rivalries, according to a top provincial official.

Vice Gov. Antonio Sunga, Lakas provincial chair and candidate for governor, said the military may have to be called in to keep the peace.

"In fact I will be formally requesting the military to send forces here," he said, adding that because of intense political rivalry, police authorities have to provide candidates and officials security.

He cited the case of the Lakas mayoralty bet in Malita town, Vice Mayor Ed Masiwel, who allegedly received a death threat some three weeks ago.

But last-term Gov. Rogelio Llanos, provincial chair of the Nationalist People's Coalition (NPC) said the apprehension over election violence is without basis. Llanos' brother, Renerio, the governor's private secretary, is the party's gubernatorial candidate.

"There is intense rivalry but have you heard of an election-related killing? I have been governor here for sometime now, in fact this is already my last term, but I do not know of any killings just because of political rivalry," he said.

Llanos even urged the Commission on Elections in Southern Mindanao and the Philippine National Police to withdraw the declaration of some areas in the province as potential hot spots.

Sunga said among the areas where election violence is likely to occur are Malita, Sarangani, Don Marcelino, Jose Abad Santos and Kiblawan.

In Kiblawan for example, intense rivalry between Mayor Jaime Caminero and former provincial board member Edgar Gan could possibly drag their supporters into violence, he said.

Last week, Gan's supporters picketed the provincial capitol, decrying his non-appointment as official candidate of the Nationalist People's Coalition (NPC).

Governor Llanos chairs the NPC's provincial chapter.

Earlier, the police provincial office confirmed that there are at least 44 "areas of concern" in Davao del Sur, most of them in hinterland villages.

Supt. Guillermo Lara, provincial police director, said an area can be considered a "hot spot" even without intense political rivalry.

"The mere presence of armed groups that might cause the failure of election in those areas is already enough for us to consider it as areas of concern," Lara said.

In neighboring Sarangani province, police and military officials have identified 25 barangays there and five barangays in General Santos City as possible "hot spots" in the May 14 elections.

The hot spots in Sarangani include barangays in Alabel, Malapatan, Glan, Kiamba, Maasim and Malungon towns where there were frequent sightings of armed groups like the communist New People's Army, Moro Islamic Liberation Front and mountain bandits.

Sarangani police director Supt. Cesar Daquil told reporters they are still in the process of validating the reports in the villages before recommending any step to be taken by the Commission on Elections.

Meanwhile, five remote barangays in General Santos City were also identified as possible hot spots—Barangays Siguel, Olympog, Upper Labay, Conel and Bawing.

Local police officials claimed that they received reports of the presence of armed groups in the said areas, but they have yet to validate whether there was a need to declare these barangays as election hot spots. *Allan Nawal with a report from Aquiles Zonio, PDI Mindanao Bureau*

Left denounces Army arrest of party-list group member

NAGA CITY—Bayan Muna, the party-list group of left-leaning organizations, yesterday protested the arrest of one of its members by the Philippine Army Feb. 21.

Salome Dalusong, Bayan Muna coordinator in Libmanan town, said Wilfredo Recto, 38, was arrested by the Bravo Co. of the Army's 42nd Infantry Battalion in what the group said was a "fake encounter" concocted by the military.

Recto was arrested shortly before Bayan Muna was to hold a meeting in Libmanan.

But Sgt. Rolando Gimenez of the civil affairs unit of the 42nd IB said there was really a five-minute armed encounter with three New People's Army guerrillas in Sitio Danawan where, he said, Recto alias Bravo and Wilmur was captured.

Gimenez said a certain Lt. Russel led the group of military men who captured Recto with an M-16 rifle and a short magazine.

But he won't provide more information on the alleged encounter.

Dalusong said they were on their way to Recto's house when they heard shots. Upon reaching Sitio Danawan they were told that Recto was arrested by the military from a camp somewhere in Taisan, Sipocot, Camarines Sur.

She said barangay officials and several civilians in the area where the armed encounter supposedly occurred told them that no encounter happened. The witnesses were quoted as saying the soldiers fired their guns and arrested Recto.

She said the military fired several shots more near the Danawan chapel after they had arrested Recto.

"Is it not that when there is an encounter there should be two parties involved? In the case of that 'armed encounter,' we only heard one group firing the guns," Dalusong said.

She added that the military had turned over Recto to the municipal jail of Libmanan after he was charged with murder.

Gimenez said militant groups denying their members' involvement in armed encounters was not new. *Juan Escandor, PDI Southern Luzon Bureau*

ROUNDUP

Death to 2 killers

BAUANG, La Union—A judge here meted out the death sentence to two men and sent six others to prison terms of 48 years each for the 1998 killing of Carmelita Barnachea, 43, and her son, nephew and uncle here. Judge Rosemarie Molina of the regional trial court ordered Dominador Cachola of Cuyapo, Nueva Ecija and Ernesto Amay of Umingan, Pangasinan to die by lethal injection for four counts of murder. Their six companions were also ordered to each pay P677,000 in damages to the victims' family.
Peter La. Julian, PDI Northern Luzon Bureau

Police chiefs relieved

TUGUEGARAO CITY—Two police chiefs in Cagayan and four others in Isabela were relieved for their failure to stop jueteng in their towns. Chief Supt. Rowland Albano, Cagayan Valley police director, said jueteng operators, who took advantage of the recent political crisis, resumed their operations in Cagayan and Isabela.
Estanislao Caldez, PDI Northern Luzon Bureau

Farmer-scientists tapped

TUGUEGARAO CITY—Ten farmer-scientists have been tapped to help in technology promotion as resource persons in agriculture technology and production in Cagayan Valley. Dr. William Medrano, executive director of the Cagayan Valley Agriculture Resources Research and Development, said the new "*magsasaka-siyentistas*" are Dr. Mario Lopez, Dr. Billy Temanel and Paulino Cabezon of Quirino; Candido Guera and Edwin Paino of Gonzaga, Cagayan; Ramon Petines, Isidro Acosta, Alberto Castillo Jr. and Diosio Millan of Isabela; and Carlos Cattiling of Ifugao. *Estanislao Caldez, PDI Northern Luzon Bureau*

Bodies released

TAGBILARAN CITY—The bodies of the two suspected New People's Army (NPA) rebels killed in an encounter on Feb. 19 were released to their families on Wednesday in Anda town. The fatalities were identified as Elecio Banting, 20, of Mabini town and Joel Arinque, 23, of Ubay town. The two were killed when a 22-man team from the 15th Scout Ranger Co. led by Lt. Leroy Daanton chanced upon a rebel group of about 40 in Sitio Lactoran, Barangay Tanod, Anda town about 7:30 Monday morning.
Chito Fuentes, PDI Visayas Bureau

Sugar sector in partylist

BACOLOD CITY—The sugar sector now has a chance to be represented in Congress through the party-list system. The Commission on Elections granted the petition for registration of the National Federation of Sugarcane Planters (NFSP) as sectoral representative at the House of Representative for the May 14 elections. NFSP president Enrique Rojas said their petition was approved on Feb. 12 but the Comelec informed them about it only on Feb. 19.
Carla Gomez, PDI Visayas Bureau

New group vs Estrada

DUMAGUETE CITY—A new local political group calling for political reform vowed to campaign against candidates endorsed by deposed President Joseph Estrada. Joel Obar, dean of the College of Law of Foundation University and one of the founders of the Citizens Solidarity Reform Party (CSRP), said their group wanted to prevent the resurgence of "another Estrada" where patronage politics was the "name of the game." The 600-strong CSRP was formed late last year but was officially launched in January.
Romy Amarado, PDI Visayas Bureau

Kidnap victim escapes

DIGOS CITY—A kidnap victim escaped from his abductors a day after he was snatched inside the Maaya Beach Resort here. But an unidentified female companion is still in the hands of the kidnappers. Racleto Taping of Banate, Malungon, Saranggani province jumped off the tricycle used by his captors to move him out of Barangay Guihing-Aplaya in nearby Hagonoy town last Saturday. He suffered gunshot wounds when the suspects fired at him. Taping could not identify his female companion. He is a vulcanizer but a number of his sisters are working in Japan. His kidnappers reportedly demanded P3 million.
Allan Nawal, PDI Mindanao Bureau

DENR plans 310,000-ha timber corridor

DAVAO CITY—The Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR) is planning to establish a timber corridor covering some 310,000 hectares of forest areas in Southern Mindanao.

The planned timber corridor, however, straddles watershed areas and land being claimed by *lumads* as their ancestral domain.

Roger Cantuba, DENR assistant regional director, said the timber corridor would be composed of reforestation areas that were earmarked for tree plantation development programs.

These tree plantation programs include the Industrial Forest Plantation Management Agreement (Ifma), Social Industrial Forest Management Agreement, Community-Based Forest Management Agreement, Agro-Forestry Forest Lease Agreement and the Usufruct tree plantation system owned by the DENR employees' cooperative.

Cantuba said an agro-forestry industrial complex would also be established in strategic areas near the timber corridor complex to serve as the centers for wood processing plants and other wood-based industries.

"Our concept is to stop exporting our timber as raw products. We should export finished products this time so we can create better job opportunities for our people," Cantuba said.

He said investors from Brunei, Indonesia and Malaysia already expressed their commitment to invest in the DENR's tree corridor project as partners in the tree plantation development or put up wood-based industries in the region.

Cantuba said they have made a presentation of the project during a meeting with their counterparts from the Brunei, Indonesia, Malaysia, Philippines-East Asean Growth Area (BIMP-Eaga) in Zamboanga City in December and received encouraging response from representatives of BIMP-Eaga member countries.

Cantuba said the DENR is also working out a scheme tapping the services of marketing firms in the BIMP-Eaga and in other Southeast Asian countries to help market forest products from the region.

Cantuba said the development of the timber corridor would be a long term project that would start with the development of some 7,000 hectares of land that are now ready for tree plantation operations.

But *lumads* led by the Pasaka Lumad Regional Confederation are against the tree plantation project, saying it would only lead to the displacement of *lumads* and encroachment of areas they consider as sacred ground.

Amelito Elio, Pasaka secretary general, said the *lumads* have a bitter experience in tree plantation projects as the Ifma program damaged their ancestral domain after investors planted "foreign" exotic tree species like *gmelina*, *acacia mangium* and *bagras*.

He said several creeks also dried up after *gmelina* trees were planted near it.

Elio said in many areas, the timber plantations under the Ifma project were used by developers as a cover for illegal logging operations.

He said Ifma holders took advantage of the programs' provisions allowing them to cut trees and sell them commercially for as long as they replant the area.

Elio said *lumads* in many areas reactivated their traditional *bagani* or warrior system to prevent tree plantation workers from encroaching into their areas.
Jowel Canuday, PDI Mindanao Bureau

'AFP turmoil worsens'

(From page A1)

Mercado said. "It's very hard to monitor because suppliers connive with military officers."

During his term, Mercado initiated steps to have the purchase of military supplies done through e-commerce.

Wong is now on "floating" status after having refused a "demotion" that Reyes had offered him to placate Marine officers angered by his open call for reforms in the corps' financial practices.

He is due to retire in December.

GMA's order

Acting Defense Secretary Eduardo Ermita said President Macapagal-Arroyo ordered Reyes as early as Feb. 18 to look into the issue that Wong had raised.

Ermita said the outcome of the investigation could affect Espinosa's chances to be named AFP chief of staff in place of Reyes, who retires on March 17.

"It could affect (his chances). Maybe it would," Ermita said at a news briefing. *(See related story on Page A1.)*

Ermita said the President gave the order for an investigation during the annual homecoming of the Philippine Military Academy Alumni Association in Baguio City.

Reyes said the AFP inspector general had started looking into the circumstances behind Wong's rift with the Marine Corps.

Ermita said his office would "monitor the conduct of the investigation or inquiry."

"The President would like everything to be straightened out, of course . . . Definitely, the President is concerned that this thing has happened, specially involving a senior officer of the (AFP)," he said.

Asked whether Ms Macapagal's order indicated that she was siding with Wong, Ermita said: "Let's just say that it is the normal course in a military organization such as the (AFP) to cause the investigation of the irregularities reported. We cannot just let it pass. (The order) doesn't have to be supportive of anybody."

Asked whether he did not find it strange that Reyes chose to apply pressure on Wong and not on those involved in the alleged irregularities, Ermita said Reyes had to make difficult decisions to protect the AFP as an institution.

"There is a saying in the military organization that the accomplishment of the mission is paramount," Ermita said, adding:

"If (Reyes) feels that by not doing so it could affect the overall state of morale of the AFP, then I think the chief of staff should be supported in such a decision.

"He is responsible for what his unit does or fails to do. When you're a commander, you must be ready to place your neck on the chopping block because every day, you make a decision (that's) either right or wrong.

"Therefore, the chief of staff can be castigated for such a decision. But he can also be rewarded with some good words if the decision is right."

Ombudsman

Reyes has tossed to the Office of the Ombudsman the investigation of the Marine Corps' questioned purchase of P3.8 million worth of Kevlar helmets in December 1998.

He said this would preclude "any speculation that there would be a whitewash in the investigation."

Reyes said the AFP inspector general and the judge advocate general had found prima facie evidence for graft.

"There might be risks involved if we would conduct a parallel investigation and come up with a different result. So we will leave it entirely to the Office of the Ombudsman," he said.

As to the purchase of P7.2 million worth of HK-MP5 9-mm rifles in June 2000, Reyes called for a pre-trial investigation prior to court martial proceedings for violation of Article of War 97, otherwise known as the General Article on Conduct Prejudicial to Good Order and Discipline.

According to records, the 72 assault rifles paid for by the Marines have disappeared and cannot be accounted for.

Five of the rifles later turned up in the possession of Taiwanese gunrunners nabbed by the police in Subic, Zambales.

Reyes said that he had requested Wong to "take active participation" in the investigation of the firearms issue, but that the admiral refused.

While the two transactions appear to give credence to Wong's call for reforms in the procurement system, Reyes is not about to change his position of support for the Marines Corps.

He said Wong would relinquish command of the Navy on March 1 and go on "floating" status until December.

But retired Navy Capt. Proceso Maligalig said it was only proper that Wong "scold the Marines because as Navy chief, he is their father."

Maligalig said it should be the Marines who must be court-martialed for ganging up on Wong, their superior.

"Wong's forced resignation is unfortunate because it will make junior officers think that it's wrong to report anomalies," said Maligalig, spokesperson of the Rebolusyonaryong Alyansang Makabansa.

PPC bets told . . .

(From page A1)

"The advice to us is not to mention the names of those in the other party because that would give them undue publicity," Monsod said when asked to comment on a slur reportedly made by reelectionist Sen. Miriam Defensor-Santiago, who's running under the Estrada-backed coalition, Puwersa ng Masa.

Administration candidates are pushing for the prosecution and conviction of disgraced President Joseph Estrada and his cronies, according to lawyer Francis "Kiko" Pangilinan, who was with Monsod at the forum.

Pangilinan and Monsod were also unfazed by the lopsided forecast of Senate President Aquilino Pimentel Jr. in favor of the opposition. Pimentel said that only four administration candidates would win.

They said voting for Estrada's ticket would mean support for his graft-ridden government.

"I have very high respect for Senator Pimentel but I firmly believe he is wrong this time," Monsod said.

Pangilinan seconded Monsod, adding that more and more people are now "embracing People Power II" and its role in unseating a corrupt leadership.

"The issue in this campaign is simple: Do they want a government like Estrada's? If they want Estrada's leadership style, then they should support his candidates. But if they want good governance, please support our ticket," Monsod said.

Chavit calls Ping a liar

(From page A1)

withdraw from the senatorial race as "he does not belong in the Senate."

Interior Secretary Joey Lina joined Singson in dismissing Lacson's tale as another black propaganda. "Candidates who wish to raise their winnability in the coming May elections will ride on the jueteng issue," Lina said.

Singson said Lacson had lied in public twice. "He said he hates politics. Now, he is running for senator. He imposed a 'no take policy' on policemen but jueteng operations continued right under his nose. He really loves to double talk," the governor said.

Lacson

Lacson shot back at Singson. "Once a crook, always a crook," he said over radio station dzMM.

Lacson insisted that Singson had met with the gambling lords.

Lacson said Singson met with the gambling lords from Batangas, Quezon, Rizal, Laguna, Northern Luzon and Central Luzon.

The former PNP chief pointed out that he believed that Lina was sincere in his efforts to eradicate jueteng and he had his track record as Laguna governor to prove this.

"He was governor and I had also served as provincial director in Laguna although at different times. And I believe he had that serious effort to rid the province of illegal gambling," Lacson said.

To show that dedication, Lina had thought of appointing Singson as consultant on jueteng because he had the "experience and exposure" in the illegal numbers game.

"But what happened? It's still early yet he has already met with the gambling lords. I don't think Secretary Lina knows about (the meeting)," Lacson said.

Letran alumni

Singson, who is helping in the government's campaign against illegal gambling, said the alumni of Colegio de San Juan de Letran could have been the jueteng operators referred to by Lacson.

The governor said the Letran alumni invited him to speak at the Casino Español on that day about jueteng and the impeachment trial of former President Joseph Estrada.

"I did not know Lacson could insult the alumni of Letran and tag them as jueteng lords," said Singson, a former drinking and gambling buddy of Estrada.

Singson said he indeed had meetings with some people—but not jueteng lords—at the Mandarin Hotel.

"By labeling the Letran alumni jueteng lords, I'm sure Lacson had just lost votes," he said.

After the speaking engagement, Singson said he went to Malacañang to attend a dinner for the prosecution witnesses against Estrada in the impeachment trial. President Macapagal-Arroyo hosted that dinner.

"I couldn't be in so many places at the same time," the governor said.

Warning

"But tell Lacson not to worry because if I would be meeting with jueteng lords, I would warn them to completely stop their illegal operations. I would do it in front of the media to ensure transparency," he said.

Singson said he would personally arrange a meeting with known vice lords probably in March "to warn" them about the criminal charges they face should they continue with their lucrative racket.

He said he would tell the jueteng lords that "we will file charges against them if they will not cooperate."

Earlier this month, Lina named him anti-jueteng consultant with a token fee of P1 a year. But Lina announced days later that Singson "declined" the title and that the governor just gave a verbal assurance of his continuing support.

Singson said he would resign as governor if Lacson could prove that he met with jueteng operators.

Singson noted that it was Lacson, not him, who had wanted the legalization of jueteng. He pointed out that Lacson had wanted a cut of 2.5 percent from the total take once jueteng is legalized.

"Lacson even wanted the power to award the franchise so he can give these to his provincial commanders. He needed to raise funds from jueteng at that time because he was too ambitious and wanted to become a senator. That's the reason he and Erap (Estrada) had a falling out. But Lacson will not win for sure," Singson said.

He said he would not dare lie to destroy his credibility.

"It was by telling the truth that I exposed the wrongdoing of the ousted President. It was by telling the truth that eventually led to Estrada's ouster," he said. "Now, I would risk my credibility by lying?"

Singson's exposé that he collected more than P400 million in jueteng protection money for Estrada over a period of 22 months led to the impeachment and ouster of Estrada.

FVR role cited . . .

(From page A1)

dent, the Speaker and the Chief Justice, as provided for in the Constitution," said Ebdane, former chief of the Philippine National Police's Directorate for Human Resource Development and Doctrination.

Ebdane made his statements in the course of dismissing questions raised by lawyer Rene Saguisag regarding Ms Macapagal's disclosure that she had met with five separate groups from the police and military since January 2000.

He was among the five officers that she had cited.

In a Feb. 24 letter, Saguisag asked Executive Secretary Renato de Villa to look into Ms Macapagal's supposed acknowledgment that she had been "plotting to oust" then President Joseph Estrada, now his client.

Acting Defense Secretary Eduardo Ermita told reporters that he saw "nothing wrong" with the then Vice President's consultations with police and military officials "given the atmosphere at the time."

Ermita said Ms Macapagal had to prepare for the possibility that Estrada would be ousted.

Asked why the consultations were done in a "clandestine" manner, he said this was to prevent the media from pinning the loyalty of the police and the military on either the President or the Vice President.

"'I think that rather than . . . 'plotting,' the Vice President at the time just wanted to be 'updated" on what was happening within the military and police units, Ermita said.

"She was making consultations . . . because at any time, she might take her oath, which was what happened," he said.

Lacson

Ebdane told the INQUIRER that he relayed to Ms Macapagal all the information concerning her security, especially when she had to travel outside Metro Manila.

Asked why Ramos did not tap then PNP chief Panfilo "Ping" Lacson at the time, Ebdane said the former President believed that Lacson was "fiercely loyal" to Estrada and feared that his request might not be acted upon.

Ebdane said that in his discussion with Ms Macapagal, he expounded on probable considerations such as what would happen after Estrada's acquittal at the impeachment trial.

"I informed her that our primary concern is her security (as Estrada's) constitutional successor," he said.

"She (was) the Vice President. She needed to be protected at all cost, particularly if things went out of hand," he added.

Ebdane also said he found no reason for him to inform Lacson about the security assistance to Ms Macapagal.

"The request was legitimate and it had to be acted upon fast. The situation was already tense and volatile at the time," he said.

Ebdane said he did not learn until recently that Ms Macapagal also met with other police officials, such as Deputy Director General Leandro Mendoza, now the acting PNP chief, and Supt. Reynaldo Berroya.

"I never got to meet them or the military generals. Maybe they had other tasks. How can there be a coup plot when all of the supposed plotters did not even meet?" Ebdane said.

"There is no plot," he added.

Guilt

Asked whether the President was in any way concerned about Saguisag's talk of a plot against Estrada, Ermita said: "I doubt it. (You are) worried only when you are guilty of something. If you are not guilty, that should not worry you at all."

In a radio interview earlier in the day, De Villa reiterated that he saw no basis for an investigation.

He said the five officers who met with the President prior to People Power II should even be awarded for what they did.

He cited the fact that some ranking military men who took part in the 1986 revolt that toppled the Marcos regime were even given a "distinguished conduct star."

"In the final analysis, the basis for (the five officers') action was their obligation to support the people in their revolt against an abusive and graft-ridden government," De Villa said.

But he said he would confer with Justice Secretary Hernando Perez "to find out if there is a legal issue on this matter."

Loyalty

By Perez's assessment, Saguisag's loyalty to Estrada is such that he saw an attempt by Ms Macapagal to overthrow the past administration even when there was none.

"As Vice President, she was entitled then to security briefings," Perez told reporters yesterday.

"Perhaps, the loyalty of Mr. Saguisag to the former president is such that he thought the present President made a coup plot against the former president," Perez added.

He also said Ms Macapagal's meetings with the generals were only held "with the end view of asking (them) to abide by the provisions of the Constitution," and were therefore "not actionable."

This means that neither the President nor any of the officers face criminal liability for attending those meetings.

Ms Macapagal identified the five officers as Armed Forces Chief of Staff Gen. Angelo Reyes; Mendoza; Lt. Gen. Edgardo Espinosa of the AFP Joint Command Staff College; Berroya; and Ebdane.

History

Senate President Aquilino Pimentel Jr. said the task of finding out what led to the military's eventual withdrawal of support from Estrada should be left to historians.

Pimentel also said that the way he understood it, Ms Macapagal had only consulted with the five officers that she cited.

"If that's so, then the proposal of Saguisag to have the matter investigated would be a very difficult, if not an impossible, proposition," he told reporters.

He said it would be difficult to find an independent, credible and powerful body to investigate the matter.

"So the way it looks to me, it had better be left to historians to find out the truth about this issue because the participants in the supposed cabal are now in high positions of authority," Pimentel said. ***With reports from Cathy Yamsuan and Christine Avendaño***

Silent turf wars rocking Cabinet

(From page A1)

tion and Communications, was also concerned over the appointment process, the source said.

Defensor said he has not yet made up his mind on whether or not to quit his post.

"I just explained my side. Our talk went well but she did not ask me to reconsider because I did not submit any resignation letter," said the 31-year-old housing chief of his meeting with the President.

He said he also told Ms Macapagal that it was not his intention to "burden or bother her with such an intramural case."

But since the appointing agency was the PMS, which is under the Office of the President, Defensor said he had no choice but to explain his side to Ms Macapagal.

Defensor, a former Quezon City congressman, said he "still has up to Wednesday, the last day of filing of candidacy in the local elections, to decide" whether to resign.

Should he decide to run for a last term as congressman of the third district of Quezon City, Defensor would replace his sister Maite as a candidate and run against former Sen. Ana Dominique "Nikki" Coseteng, former councilor Mike Planas and former pro cager Franz Pumaren.

Apology

Defensor had expressed disapproval over two appointments made by the PMS to agencies under the HUDCC.

The two appointees are Zorayda Alonso, president and chief executive officer of the National Home Mortgage Finance Corp., and Ed Pamintuan, general manager of the National Housing Authority.

In radio interviews, Garchitorena apologized yesterday for what she called an "oversight" and appealed to Defensor to stay on at his post.

"We talked by phone on Friday. I told him that if I had been remiss in some way, I was sorry," she said in Filipino in one interview with radio station dzBB.

But she explained that it was the President who made the final decision on the questioned appointments.

How meeting went

Pamintuan, a former Angeles mayor and defeated candidate for a Pampanga congressional seat, said the President wanted Defensor to stay on.

"The President told him not to resign. I also asked him not to resign because I said I would help him while he addresses a major challenge like housing," Pamintuan said. He said Defensor announced his "deadline" to make up his mind about quitting during the breakfast meeting, which Pamintuan and the President's Chief of Staff Renato Corona also attended.

According to Pamintuan, Defensor asked the President why Garchitorena had not consulted him on the two appointments, which took effect Feb. 21.

Pamintuan said the housing chief was "only concerned about (the) PMS (appointment) process."

Garchitorena was not at the meeting, but the President reportedly wanted to review how the PMS went about appointing Pamintuan and Alonso.

Another Malacañang source said Ms Macapagal was not likely to recall the appointments.

Pamintuan said Defensor told the President that he had no problem working with the former mayor, and that Ms Macapagal asked the latter to work with the housing chief.

On the sidelines, housing sources claimed that it was not his being "bypassed" that Defensor was angry about.

They claimed that he originally wanted to chair both the HUDCC and the NHA, a plan he made known to the PMS.

When asked if Defensor insisted on this plan at yesterday's meeting, Pamintuan declined to comment.

'Just resign'

Sen. Rodolfo Biazon Jr. urged the President to immediately resolve the controversy, while Senate President Aquilino Pimentel Jr. said Defensor should just go ahead and resign instead of threatening to do so.

"That's the thing for him to do because if he is threatening to leave, the implication is that he just wants" to be talked out of it, Pimentel said.

The Palace source said that key appointments had allegedly "been collared either by people closely associated with the Ayala business group or the (former President Fidel) Ramos clique."

Garchitorena herself is a former president of the Ayala Foundation Inc.

The PMS chief admitted that she knew Alonso, but said she had cleared her final recommendations with Finance Secretary Alberto Romulo because the NHA and the NHMFC were "financing institutions."

But Defensor stressed the need to be consulted on appointments to key positions in the housing department, citing a case involving the supposed last-minute release of P36 million from the National Housing Authority.

According to Jopet Sison, whom Defensor had tapped to form a core group at the NHA, the group discovered that P36 million was about to be released from the NHA coffers without Defensor's knowledge to pay for a piece of land in Dagat-Dagatan, Navotas.

Sison said the release was only blocked after Defensor issued a directive stopping all releases of funds.

'Love *na* love'

Defensor expectedly drew "100-percent support" from fellow Spice Boy Bukidnon Rep. Juan Miguel Zubiri, who said that the "oversight" had placed the presidency in a bad light.

"Mike should have been consulted. After all, it's Mike who would be working with these people and not them (officials of PMS)," Zubiri said.

Another Spice Boy, Agrarian Reform Secretary Hernani Braganza, said he felt sorry that Defensor "could have been so frustrated that he had to come out in the open (regarding the appointments)."

"Love *na* love *pa naman siya ni Presidente* (And the President is so fond of him, too)," he said.

In a statement faxed from Bangkok, Braganza said "I am surprised that my name was mentioned in newspaper reports as one of the Cabinet members who are planning to resign."

"I have no intention of running away from (the) challenge" of heading his department, said the secretary, who is meeting with officials of the United Nations-Food and Agriculture Organization.

Overlapping functions

Biazon, chair of the Senate committee on urban planning, housing and resettlement, said Defensor's intention to resign "raises a concern as to the shelter program of the Macapagal administration."

In a statement, Biazon cautioned that the government's housing agencies have "overlapping functions and conflicting interests in the preservation of their turfs" and that "if the heads of these housing agencies do not understand each other and do not see eye to eye, the government's shelter program will suffer."

He said "it is important that harmony among the heads of the different agencies be the primary consideration in their appointments."

The HUDCC chair's authority over the agencies is one of coordination rather than direct control. ***With a report from Donna S. Cueto***

DOH: Beef sold in RP safe but...

(From page A1)

meat from the 13 European countries began in November last year.

Health Secretary Manuel Dayrit said the government had put up stringent measures to prevent the spread of the incurable disease in the country.

The Department of Agriculture has banned the entry of livestock from known "mad cow disease" countries such as United Kingdom, Belgium, Ireland, Italy, France, Spain, Switzerland, Portugal, the Netherlands, Denmark, Luxembourg, Liechtenstein and Germany.

Memorandum Order 19 prohibits the importation of live cattle, sheep and goats, their meat and meat products, bovine embryo, meat and bone meal and other feed ingredients from the 13 European countries.

"At present, there is no test that will differentiate contaminated meat from those that are not. Banning imported meat from these countries will minimize the risk of contaminated meat that will enter the human food chain," Dayrit said in a statement.

The assurance from the DOH and Pampi came following reports that the country had imported European beef.

The cause of concern resurfaced following reports that two of three beef shipments from Ireland were able to enter the country through the port of Cebu.

The Bureau of Customs held the third shipment on suspicion that it was tainted with BSE.

Monterey

The shipments belonged to Monterey Foods, a subsidiary of food and beverage giant San Miguel Corp.

At least 80 cases of human deaths traced to the eating of BSE-infected beef have been reported in Europe since 1986.

Only a week ago, one death was reported by newspapers in Sweden. No case yet has been reported in Asia.

There is no known cure for BSE, according to the World Health Organization.

In humans, the disease is called the variant Creutzfeldt-Jacob disease. It is a fatal degenerative disease characterized by a long incubation period of 15 months to 30 years, insidious onset of illness with psychiatric symptoms and agonizing death.

The disease was first discovered in 1986 in the United Kingdom after several cows turned "mad." They were fed with innards from sheep believed infected with BSE.

The health department revealed that the government was monitoring deaths among homegrown cows.

The DOH is collaborating with the Center for Disease Prevention and Control in Atlanta to prevent its occurrence in the country.

Francisco Buencamino, spokesman and executive director of Pampi, said there was no basis for the mad cows scare since all the three shipments from Ireland had not been accepted by Monterey because of the ban.

"We assure the public that no meat from the banned countries was imported by meat processors after the order was announced," he said.

Buencamino told the INQUIRER that there was a "misinterpretation" on what happened to the shipment in Cebu.

The shipment, all originating from Ireland, was ordered by Monterey on Oct. 19, 2000 or two weeks before the imposition of the ban by the DA.

This meant that by the time the ban was issued, the shipments were already on their way to Cebu.

Canceled shipment

But upon receipt of the memorandum order on the ban and its implementing guidelines, Pampi said Monterey immediately made arrangements to cancel and divert shipment.

Buencamino said that while the suppliers were able to show papers showing the shipments were cleared of any disease, Monterey nevertheless agreed to cancel them because of the mad cow scare.

As for the third shipment, Buencamino said he was told that the Bureau of Customs had agreed to release it on the condition it be returned to Ireland.

Monterey assured that not a single kilo entered the country's meatshops.

"All importations of Monterey are covered by Veterinary Quarantine Certificates from DA/BAI, and Veterinary Health Certificate from the country of origin that the meat is mad cow disease- and dioxin-free and that the beef is sound, healthful for human consumption," Monterey said.

During the past three months, the National Veterinary Quarantine Service (NVQS) seized at least three shipments of European meat products "which could have been contaminated with mad cow disease."

"We have communicated with the respective European governments about our desire to re-export them to their countries of origin. But the exporters do not want to take them back. That's the problem," said Dr. Ronello Abila, NVQS chief.

LEADERSHIP ROW

BAP poll guidelines sent

By June Navarro

FREDDIE Jalasco yesterday submitted the guidelines of the elections prescribed by the Philippine Olympic Committee that would usher in a change of leadership in the troubled Basketball Association of the Philippines.

Directed to submit the details of the election within 15 days, Jalasco furnished the POC a copy of the proceedings, which would trigger a top-to-bottom revamp within the ailing association.

Jalasco said the process should start with basketball associations from various parts of the country sanctioned by the BAP. These associations, he said, must elect a regional director that will represent their region in the national assembly.

The 16 regional directors elected, in turn, will be given voting rights together with the members of the BAP executive board appointed by the president.

Also, a commission of elections will be formed including a representative from the POC to monitor the turn of events.

Included in the guidelines is the timetable for the elections, which Jalasco projected to be not less than six months, all held within the bounds of the BAP charter.

The POC will deliberate on the matter upon the recommendation of its membership committee chaired by Buddy Andrada of tennis.

The POC bestowed recognition to Jalasco in a move to settle the leadership dispute within the BAP.

Angered by the POC's decision, Quintellano "Tiny" Literal, the leader of the other BAP faction, filed a P5-million damage suit against Jalasco and POC president Celso Dayrit at the Regional Trial Court in Parañaque City.

Meanwhile, office equipment and important documents inside the POC office were spared from the fire that engulfed the PICC building last week but were severely water-damaged after firefighters put off the blaze.

Dayrit said the POC is contemplating moving to another office in another building but also within the PICC complex.

In another development, Jalasco, Southeast Asian Games chief of mission, said the joint Philippine Sports Commission-POC SEAG Task Force will submit the complete list of the RP delegation and projected budget of the games to the PSC tomorrow.

The joint PSC-POC Task Force bared an estimate of 350 athletes and officials, each pegged at P75,000 per head, who will represent the country in the week-long biennial meet in Kuala Lumpur this September.

Allenby wins largest PGA Tour playoff

LOS ANGELES —No matter how many guys he has to beat, Robert Allenby is becoming the master of sudden-death playoffs.

In the largest playoff in PGA Tour history, the 29-year-old Australian laced a 3-wood through a cold, raw rain to 5 feet (1.5 meters) on the first extra hole and made the birdie putt Sunday to win the Nissan Open against five other players.

It was Allenby's third PGA Tour victory, all of them won in playoffs, none quite like this.

Six players finished at 8-under 276, some of them at least an hour before Davis Love III stumbled badly on the closing holes at Riviera Country Club, and before Allenby and Jeff Sluman each bogeyed the 18th to fall back into a share of the lead.

The playoff was the largest since six players went extra holes in the 1994 Byron Nelson Classic, but that tournament was only 36 holes because of rain.

Allenby, who closed with a 1-under 70, clinched his fist and gritted his teeth as the most important putt of the day disappeared into the cup at No. 18, the famed closing hole at Riviera that now has another piece of history.

This was a day of survival, and the bitter rain that muddied Riviera was only half the battle.

Bob Tway was the only other player to reach the 18th green in the playoff, but his 35-foot (10.5-meter) shot stopped a foot (30 centimeters) short.

The other contenders were Dennis Paulson, Brandel Chamblee, Sluman and Toshi Isawa, who was trying to become the first Japanese player to win a PGA Tour event on the mainland.

Allenby won $ 612,000. A year ago, he defeated Craig Stadler on the fourth playoff hole in the Houston Open, and beat Nick Price on the first playoff hole in the Western Open.

That this playoff lasted only one hole was surprising. Playing particularly long because of the soggy conditions, it required two perfect shots to even have a look at birdie. That's just what Allenby did.

Love was in position to win for the second time in his last three tournaments, clinging to a one-stroke lead until a horrific collapse. He played his last four holes in 4 over and wound up with a 75, missing the playoff by two strokes.

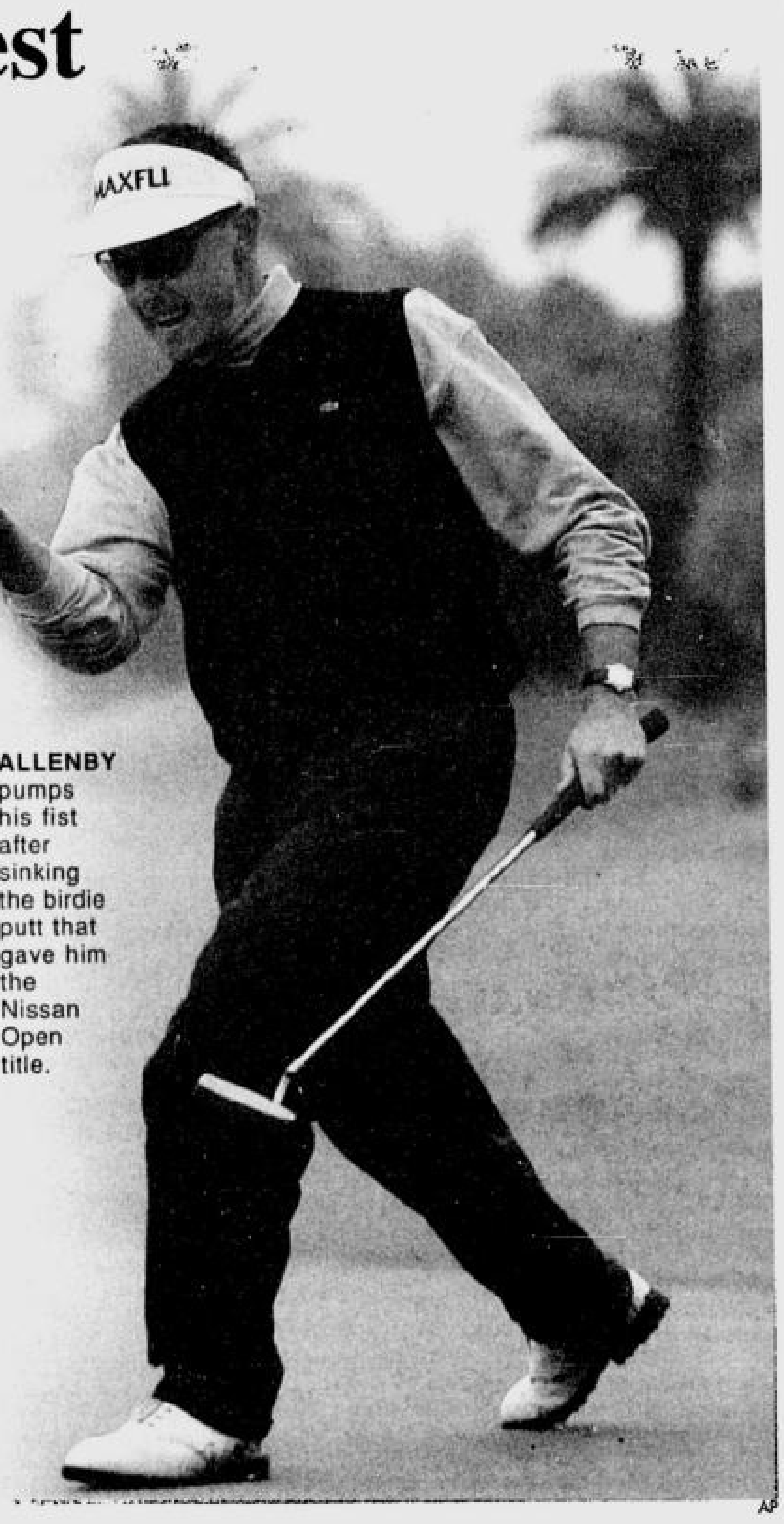
His only consolation was a $ 500,000 bonus for winning the West Coast Swing.

Tiger Woods played the final hole with his cap turned backwards, but that didn't seem to help with the rain or his luck. He had an even-par 71 and finished in a tie for 13th. Woods has gone eight PGA Tour events without winning, his longest stretch since he went 14 tournaments without a victory from May 1998 to February 1999.

So ends a wild West Coast Swing. As the PGA Tour moves across the country to Florida, there have been nine tournaments and nine winners, and rarely a dull moment.

Love started the final round at 10 under with a three-stroke lead, which he figured would feel like an even larger margin because of the cold, raw rain.

It took him only three holes to lose the lead. *AP*



ALLENBY pumps his fist after sinking the birdie putt that gave him the Nissan Open title. AP

MAD motocross tilt gets going March 3

AS part of their continuing effort to promote youth and sports development, Hartebeest Entertainment Corp. and MAD (Mamamayan Ayaw sa Droga) will jointly stage the National Motocross Super Series 2001 at the Block 56 CEPA near Gate 1 in Fort Bonifacio starting Saturday, March 3.

The country's top motocross riders led by defending champion Glen Aguilar and Kenneth San Andres are expected to see action in this 12-part series also supported by actor-sportsman Richard Gomez and PLDT.

Aguilar will depend the titles in the centerpiece pro open and pro 125 categories against perennial rivals Jovie Saulog, Ernie Leongson, Bebet dela Cruz and 1999 champion 300-299 last year.

San Andres, the pride of Valenzuela City, will seek his seventh straight championship in the equally exciting mini class.

Aside from Fort Bonifacio, the annual series will also be held for the first time in five other key cities in the country: Puerto Princesa (March 31), Cebu (May 5), Ormoc (June 2), Dumaguete (July 14) and Cagayan de Oro (Aug. 11).

"We would like to give motocross fans in the Visayas and Mindanao the chance to personally watch the event and see their motocross idols in action," said Hartebeest marketing manager Marilen Nunez, who was mainly responsible for the successful staging of the event the past two years.

Nunez said there will be 16 race categories this year.

For details, call Hartebeest Entertainment Corp. at tels. 723-8896 and 725-2484.

'Tac' dominates field

MULTITITLED Nathaniel "Tac" Padilla stamped his class anew in the local shooting circuit recently by lording it over in three events–rapid fire, center fire and standard pistol–at the PSC range in Fort Bonifacio.

The 36-year-old Padilla, general manager of Spring Cooking Oil and son of former Olympian Mariano "Tom" Ong, tallied 576, 563 and 567 points in the rapid fire, standard pistol and center fire events, respectively, to lead the eliminations for the Philippine team to the Southeast Asian Games.

"I'm happy with my performance considering that I had little time to practice due to my business commitments," said Padilla, who won his first international gold medal 24 years ago.

Padilla beat Carlos Vincent Medina (570) and Inocentes Dionesa (557) in rapid fire, Gilbert Escobar (541) and Dionesa (537) in standard and Dionesa (560) and Carolino Gonzales (554) in center fire.

Gonzales redeemed himself by winning the free pistol event. He scored 556 to rout Marcelo Gonzales (535) and Escobar (531).

Walker, Bondoc prevail

FORMER Southeast Asian Games champion Ruby Chico-Walker and ex-jungolf standout Gene Bondoc led the winners during the first leg of the Titleist-Footjoy National Amateur Circuit at the Riviera Golf and Country Club in Silang, Cavite recently.

Chico-Walker defeated Aileen Chua by two strokes for the ladies championship division crown while Gene Bondoc beat Nico Faller for the men's championship title in runaway fashion.

Joey Lejano and Cynthia Antonio took the low gross awards in lower and ladies divisions, respectively, of the four-day event sponsored chiefly by Titleist and Footjoy and conducted by the National Golf association of the Philippines.

The division winners of the tourney supported by Chris T Sports, Nextel and GG&A Club Shares were Ronnie Littaua in Group I, Juan Miguel Garcia in Group II, Randolf Cinco in Group III, Enrico Acosta in Group IV and Josephine Barredo in the ladies category.

Littaua won over Islamy Rahmat while Barredo edged Marie Guerrero.

SPORTS ON TV

Compiled By Lorenzo Manguiat

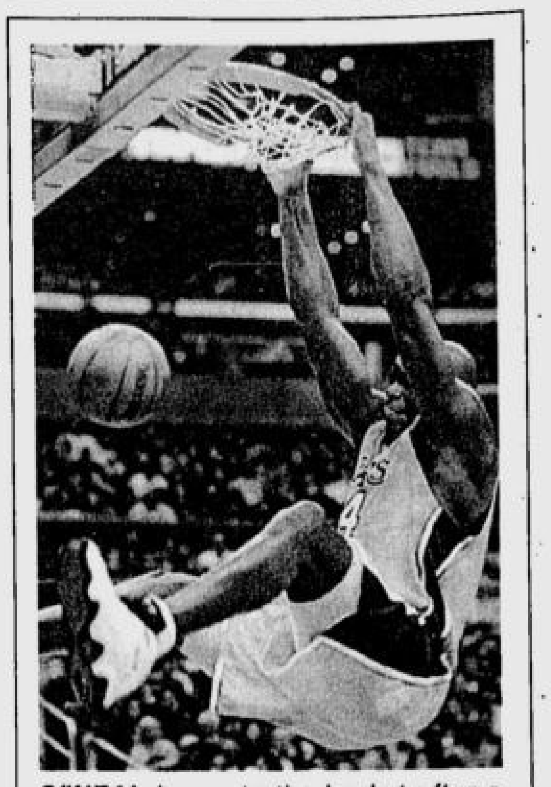
BAKSETBALL: US NCAA - Notre Dame Fighting Irish vs Connecticut Huskies at 8 a.m. on ESPN

Chinese National Basketball League, Semifinals at 3:30 p.m. (r) on Star Sports

NBA - Sacramento Kings vs Toronto Raptors at 5 p.m. (r) on ESPN

GOLF: PGA Nissan Open, Day Two at 8 a.m. (r) on Star Sports

LPGA Cup 'O Noodles Hawaiian Ladies Open, Final Round at 1 p.m. (r) on ESPN



O"NEAL hangs to the basket after a slam dunk. AP

O'Neal keys LA victory

LOS ANGELES—Shaquille O'Neal dominated the inside with 37 points, 19 rebounds, six assists and five blocked shots as Los Angeles beat the Orlando Magic, 106-100, Sunday night for the Lakers fourth win in a row and ninth in 11 games.

The Lakers played without Kobe Bryant, the NBA's second-leading scorer, for the third straight game due to a sprained right ankle.

Brian Shaw added 20 points and seven rebounds and Rick Fox scored 17 points for the Lakers, who won despite making only 29 of 53 foul shots.

Tracy McGrady had 25 points, eight rebounds and eight assists, and Mike Miller had 19 points and eight rebounds for Orlando, which lost its third straight following a franchise record-equaling nine-game winning streak.

Knicks 88, Kings 86

In New York, Latrell Sprewell scored four of his 18 points in the final 41 seconds and the New York Knicks held the Sacramento Kings to two field goals during the final nine minutes of an 88-86 victory.

Allan Houston scored 21 and Kurt Thomas and Glen Rice came off the bench to add 10 apiece for the Knicks, who won for just the third time in their past eight games.

Suns 90, Jazz 80

In Phoenix, Shawn Marion had spectacular game with 24 points and 14 rebounds, but was carried from the floor on a stretcher after sustaining a concussion in a frightening fall in the final minute as Phoenix snapped Utah's five-game winning streak.

Marion soared for a rebound, came down on the back of Utah's John Starks and slammed headfirst to the court.

Complete results: New York 88, Sacramento 86; Phoenix 90, Utah 80; Indiana 110, Minnesota 100; L.A. Lakers 106, Orlando 100; Milwaukee 122, Golden State 95; Cleveland 101, Detroit 94; New Jersey 101, Washington 91. *AP*

RP 5 beats Negros

THE PHILIPPINE team again experienced anxious moments before cutting down the Negros Slashers to size, 72-67, Sunday in the second game of its southern tour at the University of St. La Salle Gym in Bacolod City.

Still groping for form and cohesion, the Nationals trailed up to the third quarter, 58-47, before hitting full throttle through its small men—Egay Echaves and Stephen Padilla.

Echaves, who was celebrating his birthday, sparkled in the final period with daring drives and snap jumpers even as Padilla shattered Negros' defenses with back-to-back triples.

The Nationals also struggled past the Cebu Gems, 73-72, Sunday in the opener of the Rexona-sponsored tune-up series.

Events organizer Albert Almendralejo said the Nationals' trip to Tangub City and Dipolog City may be postponed even as the Ormoc and Dumaguete stops are being finalized.

Roy Luarca

ERRATA

In the **FEP Printing Supplement** published yesterday (pages C6-C10 of the Inquirer) featuring the FEP Cebu plant anniversary and the FEP Davao plant inauguration, the following errors were printed:

- The acronym "FEP" was called Far East Printing, and;
- Dennis O. Valdes was referred to as FEP president.

FEP Printing Corporation was established in March 1993 as a joint venture of the major stockholders of the Philippine Daily Inquirer newspaper. The stockholders were represented by **Far East Media Inc., Excel Equities Inc.** and the **Pinnacle Printers**. The initials of the three corporations spell out the true acronym of FEP.

Dennis Valdes is FEP Printing Corp.'s **executive vice president**, not its president.

The Inquirer sincerely apologizes for the errors.

PAL SENIORS CHAMP

Avelino Zapanta (fourth from left), PAL president, and Cesar Munos hoist the trophy as members of the victorious Luisita squad look on during the awarding ceremony of the 54th PAL Interclub Seniors championship Saturday in Cebu City. Also shown, from left, are Alex Montelibano, King Sumulong, Richie Garcia, Marcelo Alfonso, Lucio Yan and Tony Garcia. Luisita defeated Riviera by 10 points to win the crown. JESS YUSON

Ucap derby starts tonight in Mandaluyong

THE HOTLY contested Ucap Cocker of the Year 2001 race will be featured anew as the "5th Ucap/BJ Greenwood 6-Cock Derby" unfolds today at the Mandaluyong Coliseum beginning at 6 p.m.

More than 45 participants are seeing action in the event sponsored by Sagupaan Super Feeds and Lakpue Drug Inc.

Starwars Sagupaan of *sabong* idol Patrick Antonio and Tony Litonjua is the current COTY leader with 25 points while derby hosts Butch Macasaet and Joey delos Santos (BJ Greenwood I) vaulted into second spot with 21.5 markers after a string of remarkable victories.

Last year's COTY winners Jet Fernando and Ramon Mencenares (San Pedro GP Eagle, 20.5) and Pete Rodriguez (Roadmaster Cobra Balbina, 20) are also among the frontrunners, along with 4th Ucap derby champ Esting Teopaco (EGT Stingers, 19); Pepito Ngo (Mr. Fatman, 18.5), Romy Pamatmat (RFP Argem Coliseum, 18.5), Vic Yu (Sir Vincent, 17), lawyer Ram Lopez (Ariba Albay, 16.5), engineer Sonny Lagon (JBB Blue Blade Balbina, 16), Macasaet and Delos Santos (BJ Greenwood, 16), Wakee Salud (Guts and Glory, 14.5), Raymond Velayo and Boy Diaz (Arnis Master II, 14).

Guest participants from the National Cockers Association, Negros Gamefowl Breeders Association and Laguna cockers are also competing in what looms as a fierce battle for supremacy.

To follow immediately is the "Joshua and Shio 4-Cock Derby" on Saturday, March 3. Hosts are Peping Suarez of San Juan and veteran cocker Renato Shio. Entry fee is P8,800 and minimum bet is P5,500. For inquiries, please contact 747-4797, 534-4110, 531-4003 and 531-4005.

If you had 266,000 hours, what would you do?

KONTRA KALAT SA DAGAT

At Petron, we utilize this time to help people have a better way of life.

Through Volunteerism in Action (VIA), hundreds of Petron employees find time every year to join hands with thousands of people from all sectors of society. They put in approximately 266,000 hours to participate in community programs in the areas of education, environment, health and social services.

In the year 2000 alone, Petron, through the Petron Foundation, undertook 14 such programs.

In Education, our Tulong Kaalaman Senters (TUKLAS) have given poor but deserving children access to better and more unique ways of learning. By providing these children with a wide range of books as well as by featuring storytelling sessions, the TUKLAS fosters in them the love of learning, intellectual growth, and the formation of values.

In Environment, our Puno ng Buhay and Kontra Kalat sa Dagat have succeeded not only in greening the environment and promoting effective waste management activities, but have spurred other stakeholders to embark on long-term efforts for environmental care.

In Health & Social Services, Petron's Lakbayanihan (medical and dental programs) regularly brought health care to various communities across the country. Our Lingap Kapwa also worked for quick and adequate relief for disaster victims, while Project J.O.Y. and Handog Kapwa bring glad tidings to underprivileged children and elderly folk every year.

Through VIA, we have found a channel for combining valuable resources with willingness to help, and for bringing these to those who truly need them. And with VIA, we have fostered what UN Secretary General Kofi Annan describes as the spirit of being of service to others: "At the heart of volunteerism are the ideals of service and solidarity and the belief that together, we can make the world a better place."

The willingness to spend 266,000 hours to make a difference in the lives of others. This is corporate citizenship. The Petron way.

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Celebrating the United Nations'
International Year of the Volunteer

PETRON FOUNDATION INC

CBA files for bankruptcy

PHOENIX—The Continental Basketball Association has filed for bankruptcy, with a number of its former teams seeking money from the defunct league. The CBA was filed Friday in US Bankruptcy Court in Grand Rapids, Michigan, home of one if its 10 former teams. Under Chapter 7, assets will be sold to help pay creditors. *AP*

SPORTS

AL S. MENDOZA, Editor ▨ EDWIN M. VILLANUEVA, Assistant Editor

Seles beats Capriati, bags title

OKLAHOMA CITY—Monica Seles, who struggled with her timing all week, found her game during the third set to beat Jennifer Capriati 6-3, 5-7, 6-2, in the finals of the IGA U.S. Indoor Championships on Sunday. Seles is 8-4 against Capriati and 2-1 in finals matchups. The victory was worth $ 27,000. AP

54th PAL Interclub starts in Cebu

BY AL S. MENDOZA
Sports Editor

CEBU CITY—The 54th PAL Interclub Golf Championship, drawing a record 71 teams, begins today with a three-cornered fight for the top plum looming in the horizon.

Venues are the relatively flat Cebu Country Club and the resurrected Club Filipino de Cebu, a tough course built in hilly Danao.

Pundits say Canlubang will have to work double-time this year in retaining the crown it gallantly captured last year in Cagayan de Oro behind the last-day heroics of ageless Tommy Manotoc.

Expected to crowd Canlubang are Southwoods and Luisita, two highly-credentialled teams in the four-day series that is known as the national team golf championship.

Southwoods won the 1999 event in its fifth year in the fabled event that rewards 3 points to a birdie, 2 to a par and 1 to a bogey.

The Woodsmen from Carmona, Cavite, prevailed over Lanang by 29 points, the biggest yet in recent memory as Southwoods dominated the field in the absence of stalwarts Canlubang and Luisita.

Exciting battle

But Canlubang stormed back with vengeance last year, engaging Luisita to a thrilling, exciting battle from beginning to end to fashion one of the most dramatic victories in the 54-year-old event.

Leading Luisita by 4 points after Day 2, Canlubang saw its lead chopped down to a measly point going to the final day of hostilities.

It was Manotoc, the PAL Interclub's most indefatigable warrior, who keyed Canlubang's victory by dishing out a superb 4-under-par 68 at Pueblo de Oro for 40 points.

That triggered Canlubang's 3-point winning margin over Luisita as Canlubang gunned down its 9th PAL Interclub crown since its Cinderella victory in 1977 in this boom city of the South.

Battered Southwoods fell to third, 16 points behind Canlubang and 13 points behind runner-up Luisita.

But Southwoods is back as the top seed again, ahead of Canlubang and Luisita. That is the view of Iggy Clavecilla, a PAL Interclub fixture.

"Southwoods is the hands-down choice to win it," said Clavecilla, a Luisita mainstay. "Canlubang will be a far second and Luisita a far, far third."

The nucleus of Southwoods' team includes Montito Garcia, Cookie La'O, Chucho Martinez, Jerome Delariarte, Juami Rocha, Jun Jun Plana, Hanson So and former national champion Artemio Murakami.

Tommy's team

Manotoc is again expected to banner Canlubang, whose other members are most likely Luigi Yulo, Solomon Gines, Juvic Pagunsan and Boyet Zaragosa, among others.

Luisita's tested guns like Clavecilla and Francis Gaston will blend with young turks Louie Dacudao and Jayron Bayron, the reigning champion of the Uratex Caddies Championships. National champion Angelo Que is the team's main cog.

Wack Wack might prove to be the dark horse, with national players Marlon Dizon and 2000 PSA Awardee for golf Gerard Cantada bannering the squad. Also in the team are Kit Lopez, Cosco Oben and Bones Floro.

Aside from the Championship Division, also to be disputed are trophies staked in the Founders, Sportswriters and Friendship Divisions.

In the PAL Seniors concluded last Saturday, Luisita, behind the big games of Lucio Yan, Richie Garcia and Alex Montelibano, beat Riviera by 10 points.

The Tarlac-based parbusters won their 9th title in 15 years of the event reserved for golfers 55 years old or older.

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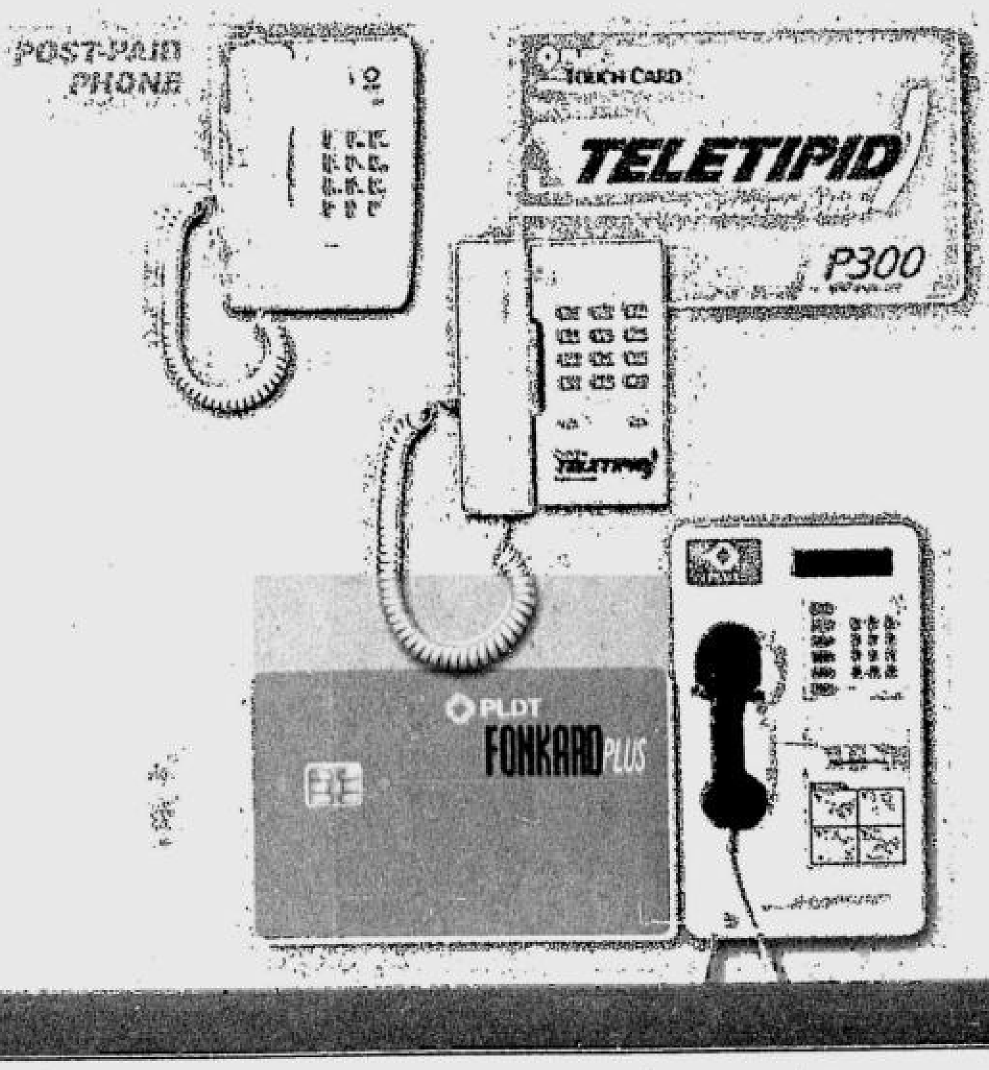

PLDT
www.pldt.com.ph

5th Nestea Beach Volley University Challenge

SEMI-FINALISTS:

February 25 results:

Schools/Organizations		Score
Men's Division		
Foundation Univ.- Dum. 1 (FUASO)	def. MAPUA 1 (PICE)	15-6
Univ.of San Jose Rec.-Ceb.2 (Athletics)	def. San Sebastian Col. 1 (SG)	15-10
Foundation Univ.- Dum. 2 (OSLETA)	def. MAPUA 1 (PICE)	15- 6
Univ.of San Jose Rec.-Ceb. 1 (Athletics)	def. San Sebastian Col. 1 (SG)	15-13
Women's Division		
San Sebastian Col. 1 (SHARMO)	def. Foundation 1 (PEHM)	15-2
Univ of St. La Salle- Bac.1 (Marketers Union)	def. South Western Univ.- Ceb. (ASSOC)	15-9
Foundation 1 (PEHM)	def. Adamson Univ. 1 (AUSG)	15-2
South Western Univ.- Ceb. (ASSOC)	def. De La Salle Univ. 1 (PSYCH)	15-5

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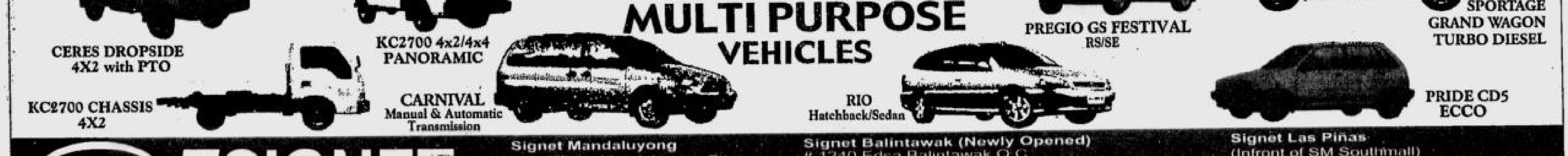
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Electrician draws life

A 31-YEAR-OLD electrician has been sentenced to life imprisonment by a Caloocan Regional Trial Court for killing his 32-year-old cousin five years ago. Judge Bayani Rivera of RTC Branch 129 found Rommel dela Cruz of Libis Nadurata, Caloocan guilty of stabbing to death Rafael Santarin, a painter and a resident of the same area. Bayani also ordered Dela Cruz to pay the victim's family P79,000 in damages.

Christian Esguerra

METRO

LOUIE C. CAMINO, Editor

NBI charges 7 Lacson men in Dacer probe

BY MICHAEL LIM UBAC

THE NATIONAL Bureau of Investigation yesterday filed criminal charges against seven members of the Presidential Anti-Organized Crime Task Force (PAOCTF) and three others who refused to cooperate with the agency in its probe of the mysterious disappearance of public relations practitioner Salvador "Bubby" Dacer.

Charged before the Department of Justice (DOJ) were Police Insp. Wilson Pedido, SPO4 Willy Nuas, PO3 Roco Matic, PO3 Edmund Gacuti, SPO2 Gomercito Cagnayo, Police Insp. Dionisio Bonoy and SPO1 Adelaido Celarco.

The three other John Does were said to be former members of the Civilian Armed Forces and Geographical Unit.

All seven PAOCTF members, who were invited for questioning by the NBI last week, did not appear before the NBI National Capital Region.

Thus, NBI-NCR chief Sammy Ong recommended to NBI Director Reynaldo Wycoco the filing of the charges.

The NBI charged them with obstruction of justice for "willful suppression of evidence."

Ong said the seven were charged in relation to the raid conducted by the PAOCTF on a house near Dacer's home on Marigold Street in Sun Valley Subdivision, Parañaque City.

Ong also charged the former subordinates of ex-PNP chief Panfilo Lacson, who also headed the PAOCTF at the time, with graft, violation of Section 20 of Republic Act 6425 (Dangerous Drugs Act of 1972) and malversation of public funds for their failure to turnover items seized during the raid.

The raid occurred on Nov. 21, three days before Dacer and his driver, Manuel Corbito, were abducted by armed men on South Superhighway at the boundaries of Manila and Makati.

An NBI insider said the raid could have been a cover for an intensive surveillance on Dacer.

Ong refused to explain the connection between the raid and Dacer's abduction, but when asked, he said: "Gentlemen, you should read between the lines."

He said the agency would also file administrative charges against Lacson's men.

Earlier, Lacson said in a statement that there was nothing wrong in the Nov. 21 operation since it was covered by a search order issued by Judge Diosdado M. Peralta of Quezon City Regional Trial Court Branch 95.

The PAOCTF men also claimed they raided the place since it was reported to be a safehouse of a car syndicate. However, when the search warrant was returned, the PAOCTF men declared that the search

NBI CHARGES/ A19

Firemen left PICC too soon

BY CHRISTINE AVENDANO

THINKING they had already contained the blaze, firemen left the Philippine International Convention Center in Pasay City on Thursday night. The fire however raged anew and gutted the upper floors of the building that housed the Commission on Appointments office.

This was disclosed yesterday by Senate President Aquilino Pimentel Jr., chair of the CA, who said there could be negligence on the part of the firemen who responded to the Feb. 23 fire at the PICC.

"That (negligence) was the tenor of the report that I have received that, because the fire trucks left much earlier than the fire being put out, there was a blaze again that eventually gutted the upper floors of the PICC," Pimentel told reporters.

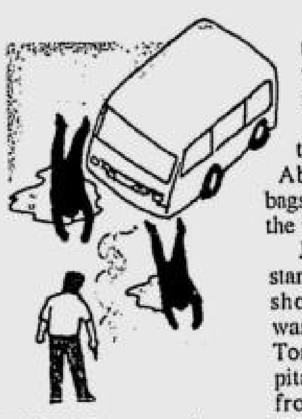
Pimentel, who initially ruled out arson, said he sought for a thorough investigation of the fire, in coordination with the National Bureau of Investigation, to "find out what really happened."

Senators Ramon Magsaysay Jr. and Blas Ople last week raised the possibility that the fire was deliberately started to burn sensitive documents at PICC offices.

The PICC houses the office of the Vice President and the Commission on Elections.

Cop kills two in jealous fit

BY JEROME ANING



A JEALOUS Manila policeman yesterday shot dead two people, his live-in partner's former lover and his friend, in Sampaloc, Manila.

His colleagues are now hunting down PO2 Nelson Abarquez, 30, who is assigned to the WPD-Station 4 in Sampaloc and a resident of 3388 West Vigan St., Sampaloc.

The cop allegedly shot dead Ricardo Garado, 30, an overseas contract worker, of 1907 Agoncillo St., Malate, and his friend Romualdo Jumanguit, 24, of Athena Classic Homes, Barangay Anabu 2, Imus, Cavite.

Police said Abarquez caught his "live-in" lover Jinky Tolentino, 30, talking with Gerado on the phone about 1 a.m. and cut off the line.

Garado, who had just arrived from the Middle East, had four children with Tolentino, said investigator SPO3 Victor Miparanum of the city police's homicide section.

Police said Abarquez and Tolentino argued, after which the policeman announced he would leave her. He then went to his room to pack his bags.

Concerned that Abarquez might have hurt Tolentino, Garado arrived in the couple's apartment a few minutes later in a Toyota Lite Ace (TPS-480) driven by Jumanguit.

Upon seeing the OCW, the policeman drew his .9-mm Beretta service pistol and shot Garado before he could enter the house, police said.

Abarquez then turned to Jumanguit, who was standing near the van.

Police said that after the killing, Abarquez grabbed his bags and escaped on board the van.

Jumanguit died instantly from several gunshot wounds. Garado was taken to the Santo Tomas University Hospital but died there also from several gunshot wounds.

The Lite Ace was later found abandoned on A. Bonifacio Avenue in Balintawak, Quezon City.

Tolentino told police she and Garado had a misunderstanding shortly before he left for abroad about six months ago.

She said she met Abarquez after the cop rented an apartment she owned. She admitted they began an affair, which she said they kept a secret.

But Garado, who arrived a few days ago, somehow learned of the affair and wanted to confront Abarquez to settle the issue.

Tolentino claimed Abarquez did not want her to return to Garado. She said the policeman threatened to kill Garado if he showed his face in their apartment.

Homicide section head Chief Insp. Juanito Taluban yesterday said a sister of Abarquez had called SPO3 Miparanum yesterday to say the policeman would surrender to Station 4 commander Supt. Luisito Saligumba.

Abarquez is facing charges for two counts of murder and car theft.

WHAT'S INSIDE

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Robbery cases up; Metro leads list

BY ALCUIN PAPA

ROBBERIES are on the rise nationwide, mainly in Metro Manila, while corruption and police involvement in crime syndicates are hampering government's drive against criminal elements.

This was revealed yesterday by Cebu Rep. Eduardo Gullas who based his report on statistics from the Philippine National Police.

Gullas said a total of 5,884 robberies were reported nationwide last year, an increase of 144 cases or 2.5 percent from the 5,740 posted in 1999.

Gullas said that the PNP's campaign to bust robbery syndicates was "being hampered by pervasive police corruption."

"In fact, whenever a big-time robbery gang is busted, there's likely to be an active or inactive police officer or soldier among those arrested," Gullas said.

In Metro Manila alone, the number of robberies reported last year increased to 2,355 cases, up by four percent from the 2,261 in 1999.

Citing statistics from Camp Crame, Gullas said that four out of ten cases reported nationwide last year occurred in the National Capital Region.

Last year, robbers staged a series of violent heists, hitting banks, pawnshops, foreign exchange dealers, gas stations and drugstores, mostly in Metro Manila.

Gullas said most of the gangs involved in the robberies are said to have the protection of scalawags within the police force.

"We cannot understand why up to now, Camp Crame has failed to neutralize these gangs that are being coddled by officers, when the police organization is already being closely watched by its own Internal Affairs Service," Gullas explained.

The National Police Reform and Reorganization Act passed in March of 1998 provided for the creation of the IAS, which is supposed to serve as the PNP's watchdog against corrupt police officials.

According to Gullas, a senator issued a statement two weeks ago that political candidates who have links with organized crime might have engineered some of the robberies that hit Metro Manila earlier this month as part of their "fund-raising" effort for the coming May elections.

Mel Lopez gives way to Dondon

FORMER Manila Mayor Gemiliano "Mel" Lopez formally gave way yesterday to ex-congressman Amado "Dondon" Bagatsing as the official Manila mayoral candidate of the People Power Coalition in the May elections.

In a press conference held yesterday at the Barrio Fiesta restaurant in Ermita to mark the launching of Bagatsing's candidacy, Lopez pledged "full support" for Bagatsing and other PPC candidates running for various local posts in Manila.

Earlier, Lopez and Bagatsing each claimed to be the official PPC candidate, causing concerns that the administration's chances of winning control of the Manila government would be reduced should both decide to run for mayor.

"I cannot allow myself to be used as an instrument of divisiveness among my party members as this would cut our chances of winning," said Lopez.

A gleeful Bagatsing said he was relieved over Lopez's decision to withdraw as the PPC candidate, saying this would consolidate the coalition's voting base and improve their chances of winning City Hall.

Jerome Aning

Recruitment seminar set

LICENSED overseas recruitment agencies will have, for the first time, a specially designed seminar on marketing their services to get more and better job opportunities abroad for OFWs.

Dubbed as "Global Employment Marketing Strategies" or GEMS 2001, the activity will be held on March 2 and 3 at the Bayview Hotel, Roxas Blvd., Manila.

Presenters from the government and the private sector will share their knowledge of new and emerging markets.

Vital statistical data will be revealed regarding historical trends in global distribution of OFWs and about the number and deployment records of all of the licensed agencies.

The entire compilation of the 1999-2000 POEA Market Updates and Overseas Employment Advisories, the directories of the Philippine embassies/consulates and labor attachés and the nationwide PESO network, pertinent POEA memorandum circulars and DOLE department orders, a marketing pocketbook, and a list of labor and employment-related websites, among others, will be distributed as part of the seminar kit.

Interested parties are advised to contact the event organizer, Kites Manila Information Center Inc., at Rm. 106, Cabrera Bldg., I, 130 Timog Ave., Quezon City, through tel. no. 925-5257, telefax No. 929-5279 and fax no. 412-5908; and contact person Fortunato R. Agbayani.

Roco party fielding Nora for governor

BY BLANCHE S. RIVERA

AUNOR

SUPERSTAR Nora Aunor now has a shot at becoming governor of Camarines Sur in Bicol, after the Aksyon Demokratiko party of Education Secretary Raul Roco announced yesterday it would field Aunor as its standard bearer in the coming elections.

"We've been negotiating with her even before Edsa II broke out," Roco said, adding the actress was a "winnable" bet because she had the support of migrant workers organizations and was a known advocate of their cause.

Roco, president of Aksyon Demokratiko, said Aunor would be taking her oath soon as the party's gubernatorial bet in her home province, along with her running mate, lawyer and former provincial board member Manuel Llaguno.

The Aksyon Demokratiko is part of the People Power Coalition, along with Reporma, Lakas-NUCD, Partido ng Demokratikong Pilipino and the National People's Coalition.

The actress, Nora Villamayor in real life, would run against incumbent Camarines Sur Gov. Luis Villafuerte, who is seeking reelection. Villafuerte's running mate is another show biz personality, singer Imelda Papin.

Aunor, who was among Estrada's leading campaigners for the 1998 elections, left the deposed president's camp to join the masses that flocked to Edsa last month to protest the 11 senators' decision not to open an envelope that supposedly contained damning evidence against Estrada.

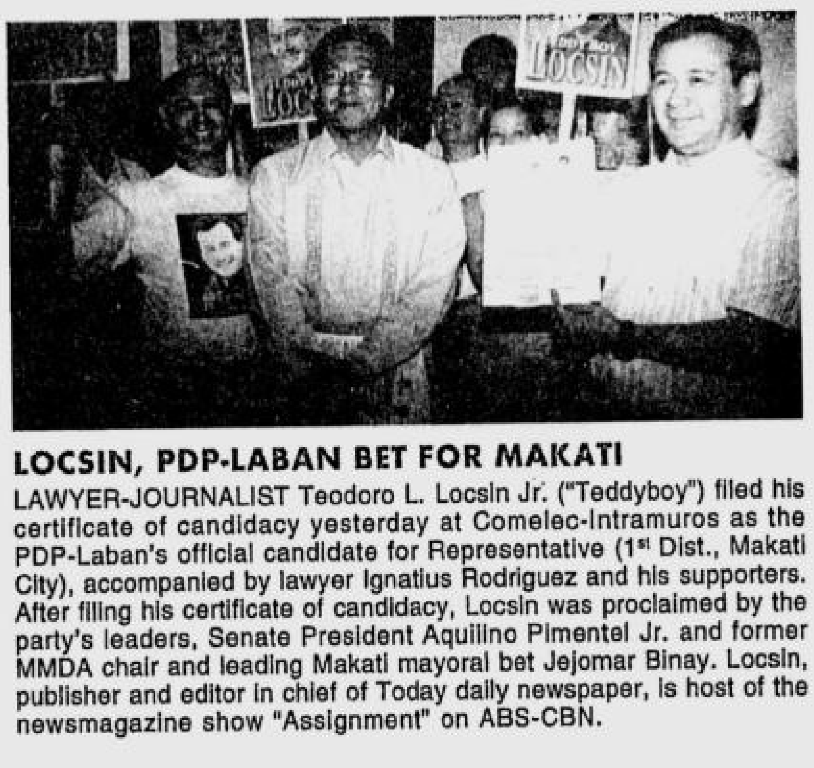
But Estrada's camp had insisted that the actress was just sour-graping because she had learned that the Lapian ng Masang Pilipino coalition would not support her plan to run for the top post in Camarines Sur.

The actress, who had been romantically linked to Estrada, even denounced the ousted president for his maltreatment of women, claiming Estrada physically abused her when they were together.

Aunor usually appeared as a victim in her movies. She was memorable as Flor Contemplacion, the domestic helper hanged in Singapore for the death of a fellow Filipino maid.

Aunor, whose rags-to-riches life story won her a place in the people's hearts, is expected to be a strong candidate for governor of Camarines Sur, from where she and Roco hail.

A former water vendor in train stations, Aunor gained stardom when she joined and won "Ang Bagong Kampeon," an amateur singing contest, and went on to conquer the entertainment industry in the 1970s.



LOCSIN, PDP-LABAN BET FOR MAKATI

LAWYER-JOURNALIST Teodoro L. Locsin Jr. ("Teddyboy") filed his certificate of candidacy yesterday at Comelec-Intramuros as the PDP-Laban's official candidate for Representative (1st Dist., Makati City), accompanied by lawyer Ignatius Rodriguez and his supporters. After filing his certificate of candidacy, Locsin was proclaimed by the party's leaders, Senate President Aquilino Pimentel Jr. and former MMDA chair and leading Makati mayoral bet Jejomar Binay. Locsin, publisher and editor in chief of Today daily newspaper, is host of the newsmagazine show "Assignment" on ABS-CBN.

A choice between Wong and the Marines

ON TARGET

Ramon Tulfo

THERE is no question Rear Adm. Guillermo Wong is honest, but honesty is not the only criterion in running an armed organization like the Philippine Navy and its sub-group, the Marine Corps. There are also other criteria like leadership which Wong sorely lacks.

There are not-so-honest commanders in the military whose subordinates would go to hell for because they're good leaders. And there are honest commanders like Wong whose men would abandon in the thick of battle.

Gen. Angelo Reyes, Armed Forces chief of staff, was right in siding with the Marines in their tiff with the Navy flag officer in command. Reyes had to choose a proud institution, the Marine Corps, over an individual, Wong.

***

I'm not saying Wong was wrong in exposing the alleged irregularities in the procurement of supplies at the corps. He was right. But he could be dead right.

When Wong called Marine commanders thieves he hurt the sensibilities not only of the officers he was alluding to but the entire corps. *Esprit de corps* or camaraderie runs very high among the Marines. Wong inadvertently was trying to destroy the esprit de corps among the Marines.

Exposing the wrongdoings of the leadership in the corps, if ever there were, would make the rank and file lose respect for their commanders. A disciplined armed organization like the Marine Corps cannot afford to have a disgruntled, grumbling rank and file when it goes to war.

***

If Wong knows the commanders who have dipped into the coffers of the Marine Corps, why doesn't he file administrative and criminal cases against them? Why did he have to condemn the entire corps leadership for the fault of a few?

The answer is obvious: Wong wanted to look good in the public eye, in general, and among the Marine rank and file, in particular, at the expense of the most disciplined organization in the whole Armed Forces.

He wanted people to shout, "Hallelujah, Wong, keep it up!"

If Wong really had the welfare of the Marine enlisted personnel in mind, he could have picked the bad eggs among the corps leadership and have them court-martialed.

***

By the way, some officers at the AFP Logistics Command (Logcom) are the most corrupt in the procurement of war materials and supplies for soldiers in the field.

Look at the luxury cars that these officers drive to work and the Rolex watches they wear. You'll ask yourself: "How can these guys afford such cars and watches on their meager salaries?"

These officers receive big commissions from suppliers who put the added costs on their items. The result is that soldiers in the field get low-quality war materials and supplies. The amount which would have been spent on quality materials went to the pockets of Logcom officers.

***

President Macapagal was probably not so serious when she admonished applicants for government positions not to approach her husband Mike Arroyo. She makes it appear that her husband doesn't have any say on the appointments to sinecures.

Of course, Mike has a say. He was behind the appointments of Titus Villanueva as customs commissioner, and Efraim Genuino, who holds all the highest positions at the Philippine Amusements and Gaming Corp. (Pagcor), from chair, chief operating officer, chief executive officer to president.

***

It seems Customs Commissioner Villanueva has made the wrong appointment to the Cebu port.

He has replaced Roland Yebes as Cebu customs collector with Marcial Lopez, formerly collector at the Legazpi City port.

Under Yebes, the Cebu customs port has become a topnotcher in revenue collections. Lopez, on the other hand, was thrown to the obscure Legazpi port because of some irregularities he allegedly committed as collector of the Batangas port, according to my customs spies.

In replacing the efficient Yebes, the customs commissioner has violated a Commission on Elections ban in the reassignment of government personnel.

***

Genuino had not yet warmed his seat as Pagcor chief when he was already approached by two brothers who control a syndicate engaged in game-fixing at the jai alai, very reliable sources told me. Jai alai, dubbed the "game of a thousand thrills," is under Pagcor supervision.

The two brothers, named Alex and Vicvic, allegedly offered Genuino P1 million a day to allow players at jai alai to fix their games, the same sources said.

The game-fixing involves making numbers which have low bets (called *dejado*) win over those where a lot of bettors placed their money (*llamado*).

Big bookies are reportedly behind the game-fixing, my sources said.

My spies said, however, they didn't have any idea whether Genuino had accepted the offer of the two brothers.

LTO asked to stop smoke belching

AFTER having deputized Metro mayors for waste management, Metropolitan Manila Development Authority chair Benjamin Abalos yesterday urged the Land Transportation Office to arrest the problem of smoke belching during the annual vehicle registration, not on the road.

Abalos maintained that much could be saved if traffic supporters did not have to apprehend smoke belchers on the street, citing the traffic problem.

"Why wait for the truck, buses and other vehicles to go out in the street when they should not be around in the first place if they have not proven themselves worthy of the road?" Abalos asked.

The LTO order deputizing MMDA traffic enforcers to apprehend smoke belchers expired last month.

Abalos who recently met with LTO director Edgardo Abenina also urged the franchise support to be stricter in issuing permit to bus and jeepney lines.

He pointed out some of these companies do not have the parking space for their vehicles, but they only make up one to meet the garage requirement.

Agnes Donato

Roxas opposes toll hike

TRADE and Industry Secretary Mar Roxas said yesterday that the operators of the South Luzon Expressways must commit to ease traffic, shorten queues at toll booths, and make the toll roads safer for motorists to travel on if they are to deserve an increase in toll rates.

Roxas suggested that the Toll Regulatory Board (TRB) includes specific performance indicators among the conditions for a toll adjustments for the Philippine National Construction Corp. and Citra Corp.

Performance by the operators can be measured based on specific performance indicators such as a higher average cruising speed at peak hours and the average number of minutes to clear toll booths, said Roxas.

According to Roxas, consumers have complained about the slow pace of vehicles traveling from the Susana Heights to Magallanes despite a truck ban during morning rush hours.

The consumers, he said, have also asked that PNCC and Citra clear the lanes of bottlenecks faster, and take steps to shorten the queues at Bicutan, Sucat and Muntinlupa exit booths.

NEW CAREER

Action star Rudy Fernandez yesterday filed his candidacy for mayor of Quezon City with actress-wife Lorna Tolentino . Fernandez would be running under the Laban ng Demokratikong Pilipino-Pwersa ng Masa coalition and is reported to be enjoying the support of disgraced president Joseph Estrada's son, Jinggoy. DENNIS SABANGAN

NBI charges 7…

(From page A17)

yielded negative results.

Documents secured by the agents showed that the raiding team had seized several car license plates, a 9-mm. Pistol, 10 grams of shabu and drug paraphernalia.

But the failure of Lacson's men to turnover the seized items had fueled suspicions that the supposed raid could have been used as a cover for an intensive surveillance operations on Dacer.

Two witnesses, both street vendors, told NBI agents that one of those who abducted Dacer was wearing a police uniform hidden by a shirt. This fueled speculations that the PNP top brass at the time was behind the abduction.

Wycoco, however, was careful not to link Lacson's men to the Dacer abduction in the absence of strong evidence.

'We are not clearing anybody. I am not saying that they are involved or they are not involved. As of now they are just being investigated for the raid which just happens to be near the house of Bubby Dacer," said Wycoco.

Can a city mayor earning ₱32,689/mo. own construction companies and garbage trucks?

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7	DOLBY DIGITAL	CAST AWAY
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4	DOLBY SURROUND	CAST AWAY
5	DOLBY DIGITAL	PAY IT FORWARD
6	DOLBY DIGITAL EX	VERTICAL LIMIT
7	DOLBY SURROUND	DEMON GATE
8	DOLBY SURROUND	BOUNCE
9	DOLBY SURROUND	PELIKULA AT LIPUNAN
10	DOLBY SURROUND	TUHOG
11	DOLBY SURROUND	MS. CONGENIALITY
12	DOLBY SURROUND	TUSONG TWOSOME
GUADALUPE COMM'L CTR		**8820950**
1	ULTRA SURROUND	TUHOG
2	SYNTHESIZED SURROUND	TUSONG TWOSOME
3	SYNTHESIZED SURROUND	CAST AWAY
SM MEGAMALL		**6331901 • 6329401**
1	DOLBY DIGITAL	FAMILY MAN
2	DOLBY SURROUND	TUSONG TWOSOME
3	DOLBY DIGITAL	MS. CONGENIALITY
4	DTS	CAST AWAY
5	DOLBY SURROUND	WOMAN ON TOP
6	DOLBY SURROUND	PAY IT FORWARD
7	SYNTHESIZED SURROUND	CLOSED FOR RENOVATION
8	SYNTHESIZED SURROUND	CLOSED FOR RENOVATION
9	DOLBY SURROUND	CLOSED FOR RENOVATION
10	DOLBY SURROUND	CLOSED FOR RENOVATION
11	SYNTHESIZED SURROUND	CLOSED FOR RENOVATION
12	SYNTHESIZED SURROUND	CLOSED FOR RENOVATION
SM CITY NORTH EDSA		**9295452**
1	DOLBY SURROUND	FAMILY MAN
2	DOLBY SURROUND	MS. CONGENIALITY
3	SYNTHESIZED SURROUND	TUHOG
4	DOLBY SURROUND	TUSONG TWOSOME
5	DOLBY SURROUND	PAY IT FORWARD
6	DOLBY SURROUND	DEMON GATE
7	DTS	CAST AWAY
8	DOLBY DIGITAL	WOMAN ON TOP
9	SYNTHESIZED SURROUND	VIRGIN WIFE
10	DOLBY SURROUND	VERTICAL LIMIT
11	SYNTHESIZED SURROUND	102 DALMATIANS
12	DOLBY SURROUND	SNATCH
SM SOUTHMALL		**8066888 • 8060782**
1	ULTRA SURROUND	SNATCH
2	ULTRA SURROUND	FAMILY MAN
3	DOLBY DIGITAL EX	CAST AWAY
4	ULTRA SURROUND	TUSONG TWOSOME
5	ULTRA SURROUND	VIRGIN WIFE
6	ULTRA SURROUND	VERTICAL LIMIT
7	ULTRA SURROUND	TUHOG
8	DOLBY DIGITAL EX	MS. CONGENIALITY
9	ULTRA SURROUND	PAY IT FORWARD
10	ULTRA SURROUND	DEMON GATE
TUTUBAN CENTER		**2514302**
1	ULTRA SURROUND	CAST AWAY
2	SYNTHESIZED SURROUND	WOMAN ON TOP
3	SYNTHESIZED SURROUND	TUSONG TWOSOME
4	SYNTHESIZED SURROUND	TUHOG
SM CEBU		**2313876**
1	DOLBY SURROUND	CAST AWAY
2	ULTRA SURROUND	VERTICAL LIMIT
3	ULTRA SURROUND	BOUNCE
4	ULTRA SURROUND	VITAL PARTS
5	ULTRA SURROUND	PROOF OF LIFE
6	ULTRA SURROUND	VIRGIN WIFE
7	DOLBY SURROUND	THE YARDS
SM ILOILO		**3209422**
1	ULTRA SURROUND	HINDI SISIW ANG KALABAN MO
2	ULTRA SURROUND	TABI TABI PO
3	ULTRA SURROUND	VERTICAL LIMIT
4	ULTRA SURROUND	BOOBA
5	ULTRA SURROUND	MALIKOT ANG AGOS NG TUBIG
6	ULTRA SURROUND	CAST AWAY
7	ULTRA SURROUND	LITTLE NICKY
8	ULTRA SURROUND	THE YARDS
SM PAMPANGA		**7128015**
1	DOLBY DIGITAL EX	CAST AWAY
2	DOLBY DIGITAL EX	102 DALMATIANS
3	DOLBY SURROUND	THE CONTENDER
4	SYNTHESIZED SURROUND	HAPLOS
5	SYNTHESIZED SURROUND	TUHOG
6	DOLBY SURROUND	TUSONG TWOSOME

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2 MS. CONGENIALITY (Advance Screening)	2 WOMAN ON TOP in DOLBY DIGITAL SOUND	6 FAMILY MAN in DTS/SDDS DIGITAL SOUND	2 MS. CONGENIALITY (Advance Screening) in SONY DYNAMIC DIGITAL SOUND	2 PAY IT FORWARD in DSD DOLBY DIGITAL SOUND
3 TUHOG	3 MS. CONGENIALITY THX (Advance Screening) in DSD/SDDS/DTS DIGITAL SOUND	7 PAY IT FORWARD in DTS DIGITAL SOUND	3 PAY IT FORWARD in DOLBY STEREO DIGITAL SOUND	3 CAST AWAY in DTS DIGITAL SOUND
4 DEMON GATE	4 THE ROAD HOME (Phil. Premiere) in DTS DIGITAL SOUND Art Film		4 SOON TO OPEN Onstage	4 SNATCH in DTS DIGITAL SOUND
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MOVIE GUIDE

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Filinvest FESTIVAL CINEMA
(Muntinlupa) tel 850.3571 or 72
1 (DDS) WOMAN ON TOP
2 (SDDS) SNATCH
3 (DTS) CAST AWAY
4 GOLD (DTS) PAY IT FORWARD
5 GOLD (DOLBY) MS. CONGENIALITY
6 GOLD (SDDS) FAMILY MAN
7 GOLD (DOLBY) VERTICAL LIMIT
8 [illegible] 102 DALMATIANS
9 [illegible] TUHOG
10 [illegible] TUSONG TWOSOME

Pearl Plaza Cinemas
(Parañaque) tel. 853.4486
1 TUHOG
2 VIRGIN WIFE
3 (DTS) CAST AWAY
4 RESERVE
5
6 (DTS)
Golden Pearl THX

Masagana CINEMAX 1-2 & 3
(Kalaw) tel 536.4315
1 (DOLBY) PAY IT FORWARD
2 (DTS) MS. CONGENIALITY
3 TUHOG

Masagana CINEMA
(Pasay) tel 831.6603
1 TUHOG
2 CAST AWAY
3 TUSONG TWOSOME

starmall Movies
(Shaw Blvd.) tel 724.4986
1 CAST AWAY
2 TUSONG TWOSOME
3 TUHOG
4 (DOLBY DIGITAL) PAY IT FORWARD
5 WAY OF THE GUN

Metropolis
(Alabang) tel 543.4001
1 RESERVE
2 TUHOG
3 TUSONG TWOSOME
4 BALA KO ANG BAHALA SA 'YO
5 DEMON GATE
6 CAST AWAY
7 PAY IT FORWARD
8 MS. CONGENIALITY

Uniwide Metromall
(Las Piñas) tel. 873.5606 loc. 1074
1 WATCH 3 MOVIE FOR ONLY P30.00
2 NAKED LIES
3 ANG BOYFRIEND KONG PARI
4 TABI TABI PO
5 –
6

Uniwide Coastal Mall
(Parañaque) tel 879.0001 loc. 2152
1 WATCH 3 MOVIE FOR ONLY P30.00
2 TALAHIB AT ROSAS
3 LITTLE HEROES LOST IN CHINA
4 TABI TABI PO

Center Plaza Cinema
(Balanga, Bataan) tel (047) 237.7007
1 BOOBA
2 VERTICAL LIMIT

FCM FAIRVIEW CENTER MALL, INC.
tel 930.9515
1 RESERVE
2 TUHOG
3 ROARING LION RAGING DRAGON

Spring
(Libertad, Pasay City) tel 831.7864
1 TUSONG TWOSOME
A ROARING LION RAGING DRAGON

JC Cinema
(Parañaque) tel 825.8626
1
3

GOTESCO CINEMA

City
(Manila) tel 734.8588
1 (DOLBY) CAST AWAY
2 FAMILY MAN
3 DEMON GATE
4 PAY IT FORWARD
5 TUSONG TWOSOME
6 TUHOG
7 (DTS) MS. CONGENIALITY
8 (SDDS) SNATCH
9 (DOLBY) WOMAN ON TOP

Caloocan
tel 362.3508
2 TUSONG TWOSOME
3 ROARING LION RAGING DRAGON
4 TUHOG
5
6

Grand Central
(Caloocan) tel 364.3781
1 TUHOG
2 TUSONG TWOSOME
3 MS. CONGENIALITY
4 (SDDS) PAY IT FORWARD
5 DEMON GATE
6 (DOLBY) SNATCH
7 (DTS) CAST AWAY
8 BALA KO ANG BAHALA SA 'YO
9 ROARING LION RAGING DRAGON

Commonwealth
tel 951.0083
1 (DTS) MS. CONGENIALITY
2 TUSONG TWOSOME
3 TUHOG
4 DEMON GATE
5 (SDDS) SNATCH
6 ROARING LION RAGING DRAGON
7 (DOLBY) PAY IT FORWARD
8 CAST AWAY

Ortigas
tel 656.6795
1 DEMON GATE
2 HAPLOS
3 (DTS) MS. CONGENIALITY
4 TUHOG
5 (SDDS) 102 DALMATIANS
6 (DOLBY) PAY IT FORWARD
7 (DOLBY) TUSONG TWOSOME

Universal
(Manila) tel 733.2470
1 TUHOG

Sampaquita
(Cubao) tel 911.7888
1 TUHOG

Dilson
(Manila) tel 734.7724
Dilson TUHOG
Lords HAPLOS
Jennet TUHOG

MARKETPLACE Mandaluyong
tel 533.3851 / 533.3856
1 TUHOG
2 TUSONG TWOSOME
3 PAY IT FORWARD
4 MS CONGENIALITY

Prima
(Pasig) tel 641.1215
1
3 TUSONG TWOSOME

Super Cinerama
(Manila) tel 733.4226 or 733.4238
1 CAST AWAY
2 TUHOG
3 ROARING LION RAGING DRAGON
4 TUSONG TWOSOME
5 MS CONGENIALITY

Divisoria Mall
(Manila) tel 244.4560 or 244.4619
1 TUSONG TWOSOME
2 TUHOG
3 BALA KO ANG BAHALA SA 'YO
4 STAR DANCER
5 ROARING LION RAGING DRAGON
6 KING COBRA 5

Baclaran LRT Cinema
tel 512.0115 or 512.0116
1 TUHOG
2 TUSONG TWOSOME
3 ROARING LION RAGING DRAGON

CINEMA 2000

Cinema 2000 Target Mall
(Sta. Rosa Laguna)
tel (049) 534.2185 / 534.2198
1 TUSONG TWOSOME
2 TUHOG
3 (DTS) CAST AWAY

Cinema 2000 Waltermart
(Calamba) tel (049) 545.7383
1 TUHOG
2 (DTS) TUSONG TWOSOME
3 (DOLBY) CAST AWAY
4 HAPLOS

Lianas Cinema
(Alabang) tel 850.1276
1 (SDDS) TUHOG
2 ROARING LION RAGING DRAGON
3 WAY OF THE GUN
4 (DTS) TUSONG TWOSOME

Lianas MovieCity
(Calamba) tel (049) 545.7202
1 (DOLBY) THE CONTENDER
2 TUSONG TWOSOME
3 (DTS) CAST AWAY
4 TUHOG
5 SA IYONG MGA HAPLOS

Olivarez Tri-Cinema
(Biñan) tel (049) 511.8883
1 TUHOG
2 TUSONG TWOSOME
3 SA IYONG MGA HAPLOS

Olivarez Los Baños
tel (049) 536.5101
1 TUHOG
2 TUSONG TWOSOME
3 SA IYONG MGA HAPLOS

Olivarez Tagaytay
tel (046) 413.0311
1 HAPLOS
2 102 DALMATIANS
3 IKA - 7 GLORYA

Morales Cinema
(Biñan) tel (049) 511.9736
1 THE CONTENDER
2 BALA KO ANG BAHALA SA 'YO
3 TUSONG TWOSOME

Sunshine
(FTI, Taguig) tel 838.4301 loc. 3376
1 TUSONG TWOSOME
2 TUHOG
3 ROARING LION RAGING DRAGON
4 HAPLOS

Cabuyao
(Laguna City) tel (049) 243.2783
1 (DTS) TUHOG
2 (DTS) HAPLOS

Fourstep
(Cavite) tel (046) 416.2385
1 TUSONG TWOSOME

Emperor
(Rosario Cavite) tel (046) 438.1657
1 SA IYONG MGA HAPLOS
2 TUSONG TWOSOME
3 BALA KO ANG BAHALA SA 'YO

Fiesta World Mall
(Lipa) tel (043) 981.0790
1 VIRGIN WIFE
2 VITAL PARTS
3 BALA KO ANG BAHALA SA 'YO
4 WHAT WOMEN WANT

Berma
tel 879.2169
1
2

CitiMall
(Parañaque) tel 820.7269
1 CAST AWAY
2 TUHOG
3 TUSONG TWOSOME
4 102 DALMATIANS

Jade Cinema
(Angeles City) tel (045) 887.5001 to 03
1 (DOLBY EX) CAST AWAY
2 TUSONG TWOSOME
3 FAMILY MAN
4 (DTS ES) 102 DALMATIANS

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Singer, worship leader returns to the country

AFTER a successful national tour in May 1999, musician, songwriter, singer and worship leader Don Moen returns to the Philippines for yet another series of his spiritually uplifting music.

Aptly titled "Don Moen: God is Good—The Philippine Tour 2001," the show will once again feature Don Moen's songs that speak of hope, faith and trust in God and his unfading kindness. The show will be at 6:30 p.m. on March 18 at Araneta Coliseum.

Each performance is not merely meant to entertain but to gather believers wanting to give praise and thanksgiving to God.

Don Moen will also be joined in by Lenny LeBlanc and Rachel Wilson.

Filipinos in other key cities in the country may also take part in this spiritual experience as Don Moen performs in Cebu (March 16), Iloilo (March 20), Bacolod (March 21) and Clark Field Pampanga (March 23 and 24).

Tickets for the Manila show at P600, P500, P300, P200 and P100, are available at Maxi-Media office (813-8999/ 893-7737) and SM Ticketnet outlets in all SM Department Store branches (911-5555).

MOEN

Campus movie on VHS, VCD formats

"BRING It On," the No. 1 campus hit movie in America, is now available on VHS and VCD formats, released by C-Interactive Digital Entertainment, the country's biggest distributor of video home products.

The movie topbills Kirsten Dunst in the role of a sultry and aggressive cheerleaders who must lead her team to its sixth championship against unexpected odds.

In preparation with the release of the campus movie, C-Interactive recently sponsored the colorful and funfilled 31st WNCAA cheerleading championships held at Rizal Memorial Coliseum.

Teams from Assumption College, Lyceum University and St. Benilde College won in the competition.

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BACOLOD
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❶ VERTICAL LIMIT
❷ CAST AWAY
❸ WHAT WOMEN WANT
❹ BOUNCE
❺ TABI TABI PO
❻ SYOTA NG BAYAN

DOLBY dts SDDS

THEATER MOVIE GUIDE

ARANETA CENTER THEATERS 911-3101	
ALI MALL CINEPLEX-1	TUHOG
ALI MALL CINEPLEX-2	TUSONG 2 SOME
ALI MALL CINEPLEX-3 (DDS)	CAST AWAY
ALI MALL CINEPLEX-4 (SDDS)	SNATCH
ALI MALL CINEPLEX-5 (DTS)	PAY IT FORWARD
ALI MALL CINEPLEX-6 (DOLBY)	102 DALMATIANS
ALI MALL CINEPLEX-7 (DOLBY)	WAY OF THE GUN
FARMERS PLAZA-1 (DOLBY)	PAY IT FORWARD
FARMERS PLAZA-2 (DOLBY)	TUHOG
FIESTA CARNIVAL	CLOSED FOR RENOVATION
NEW FRONTIER	CLOSED FOR RENOVATION
MANILA	
EASTERN	
MAXIM	PAY IT FORWARD
MIRAMAR	ARAYY / HUNGER FOR LOVE
ODEON	WAY OF THE GUN
ODEON-2	SHADOW OF MARTIAL ARTS
ROBEN	TUSONG 2 SOME
TANDEM-1	SA IYONG MGA HAPLOS
TANDEM-2	IKA - 7 GLORYA
TIMES	UNBREAKABLE / REPLACEMENT
QUEZON CITY	
ACT-1	ANAK NG YAKUSA
ACT-2	ANAK NG KANO
ACT-3	ALIPIN NG TUKSO
ACT-4	TURN ON
CORONET-2	TUHOG
QUEZON-1	TUSONG 2 SOME
REMAR	TUSONG 2 SOME
REMAR-2	SHADOW OF MARTIAL ARTS
CUBAO	
OCEAN SUPERAMA	TUHOG
OCEAN CINEMA-A	BOYFRIEND KONG PARI
OCEAN CINEMA-B	KATAYAN
MANDALUYONG CITY	
SHANGRI-LA PLAZA MALL	635-20-79 / 633-78-51 TO 70
CINEMA-1	PAY IT FORWARD
CINEMA-2	SNATCH
CAINTA RIZAL	
STA. LUCIA EAST	(681-54091 TO 19)
CINEMA-1	TUHOG
CINEMA-2	TUSONG TWOSOME
CINEMA-3	FAMILY MAN
CINEMA-4 (DOLBY DIGITAL)	WAY OF THE GUN
CINEMA-5 (DTS)	VERTICAL LIMIT
CINEMA-6	SA IYONG MGA HAPLOS
CINEMA-7	VIRGIN WIFE
CINEMA-8	ROARING LION RAGING DRAGON
CINEMA-9 (DTS)	CAST AWAY
CINEMA-10 (DOLBY DIGITAL)	PAY IT FORWARD
CINEMA-11 (SDDS)	102 DALMATIANS
CINEMA-12	SNATCH
CINEMA-14	DEMON GATE
CINEMA-15	TUSONG TWOSOME
LORES	
CINEMA-2	SA IYONG MGA HAPLOS
CINEMA-3	LAKAS AT PAG IBIG
POWER PLANT CINEMA	
CINEMA-1	WOMAN ON TOP
CINEMA-2	CAST AWAY
CINEMA-3	PAY IT FORWARD
CINEMA-4	FAMILY MAN
CINEMA-5	SNATCH
CINEMA-6	MS CONGENIALITY

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Hear the Difference, Feel the Excitement

Two kinds of rape in 'Tuhog'

VIEWFINDER

Nestor U. Torre

SCREENWRITER **Armando Lao** and director **Jeffrey Jeturian** have come up with a compellingly insightful film in their latest collaboration, "Tuhog."

The title has two meanings: in moviemaking, it means to shoot a scene without cuts; related to the film's story, it refers to how a vile man violates both his daughter and his granddaughter (*tinuhog*).

The juxtaposition is apt because that's what the production does for the most part: sequentially go from the real-life incestuous rapes to their film versión, after the rights to the two women's story have been bought by an exploitative movie studio. But fiction over-elaborates on fact, as escapist and erotic filmmaking is wont to do.

Thus, we see that the granddaughter is first violated in a crude and even awkward way, but the film version embellishes on and "sexes up" the scene for maximum titillating effect. The actors in the movie within a movie also move and talk in an unrealistic, melodramatic way that compromises the pain and horror of the original events.

This is a telling juxtaposition that says a lot about how local movie "art" does a disservice to both its material and audience.

But this isn't the film's most powerful point. That comes on strong when we are made to see that irresponsible filmmaking is not just a distraction, but in fact subjects the two women to another kind of rape, this time for their dignity as victims.

The exploitative film version holds them up to ridicule, and that's a second act of victimization that they find it harder to recover from.

Sure, they were paid P100,000 to "tell all," but the money can't even begin to compensate for the psychic wounds that the bold movie about their ordeal has inflicted on them.

On point of performance: Initially, **Ina Raymundo** appears to be too old to be credible as the 16-year-old rape victim. Soon enough, however, the painful believability of her portrayal makes the age discrepancy a minor problem.

Ina effectively draws us into the vulnerable, violated core of her young character, and we wonder why it's only now that the bold star has been given a chance to show that she can really act.

Also acutely believable are the performances turned in by the vile grandfather and Ina's mother (**Irma Adlawan**).

The actors in the film version do well, but they're hamstrung by the intentional fakery of the melodramatic acting style that they are made to assume.

Thus, **Klaudia Koronel**, **Jaclyn Jose** and **Dante Rivero** are limited to cliché performances that pale in comparison to the portrayals of the actors who play the "real-life" characters.

Another production element that underscores the dichotomy between fact and film fiction is the cinematography, which is done here in distinctly contrasting styles—sharp and sere for reality, and photographed and lit in an overly lush and beautiful manner for the film version.

This correspondence of elements in service of a unified objective tells us that we're in good cinematic hands. Even this bold movie's sexy scenes are shot in a non-lurid manner, or lurid for a purpose that goes beyond turning the audience on.

On the debit side, some parts of the film are too slow, And, in the end, the film version takes centerstage for too long, as the exaggerated plotting goes into all sorts of "sex with suspense" elaborations and detours, when what viewers want to see is the effect of the exploitative film version on the real victims' subsequent lives.

But "Tuhog" is too good to be grievously impaired by these and other "off" moments. The film holds a mirror up to the face of the bold-film industry, and the reflected image is shocking to behold.

This week on 'Oprah!'

TONIGHT, Tuesday, learn how to get that dream body you've always wanted in "Dr. Phil's Weight Loss Advice."

Wednesday, Feb. 28, dealing with problem children in "Change Your Behavior/Change Your Child."

Thursday, March 1, the grooming secrets of the stars in "Glamorous Makeovers."

"Oprah" airs on Studio 23, 10:45 p.m.

Quote, unquote

MARILYN Monroe: I've been on a calendar, but I've never been on time!

Charles Buxton: You will never "find" time for anything. If you want time, you must make it.

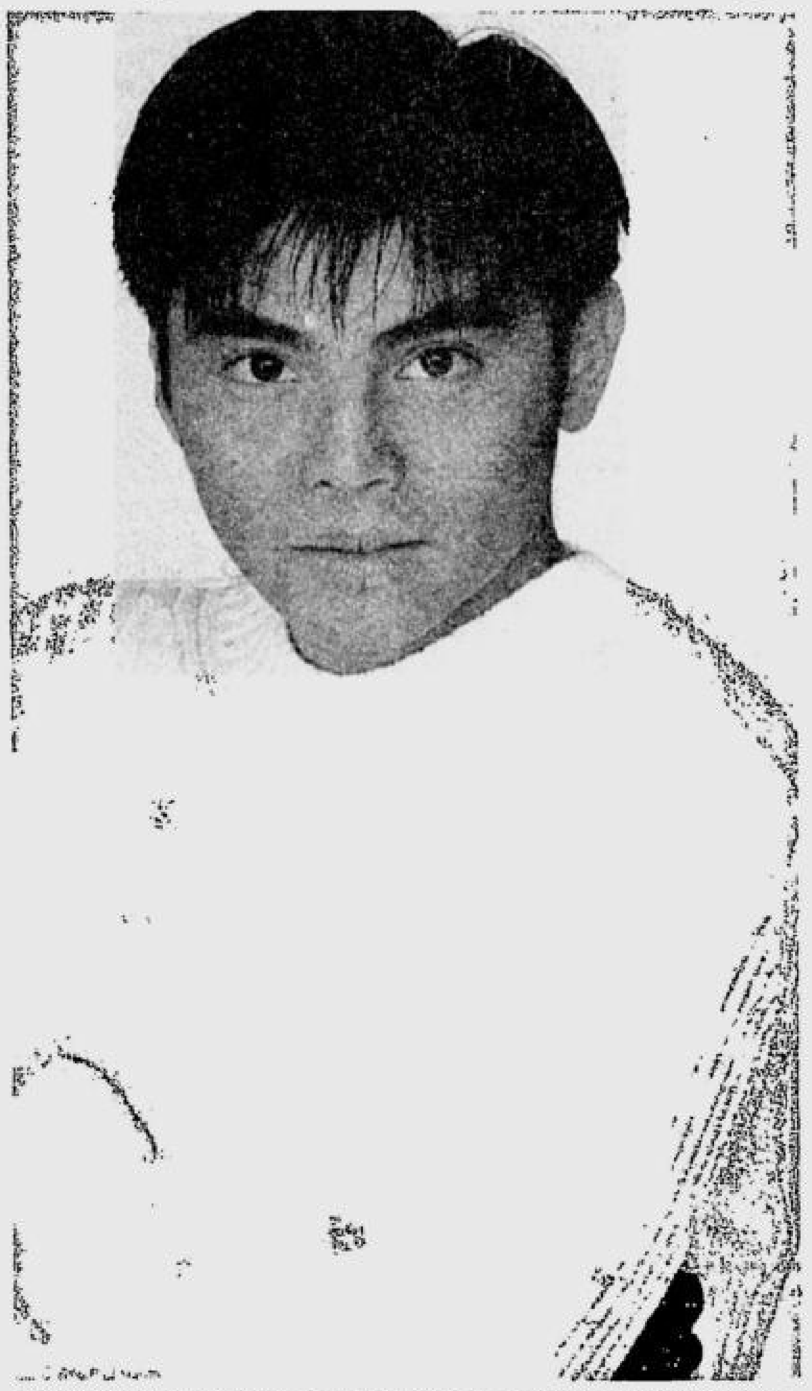
Andy Warhol: They always say that time changes things, but you actually have to change them yourself.

John Wayne: Tomorrow is the most important thing in life. It comes to us at midnight, very clean. It's perfect when it arrives and it puts itself in our hands. And it hopes we've learned something from yesterday!

Marvin Agustin: Sharing is good for the soul

SHOWBIZ TIDBITS

Leah Salterio



BUSINESSMAN Marvin says his shops' earnings go to the bank, untouched.

MARVIN Agustin has been the breadwinner of his family since he was a teenager. Even if he had to send himself to high school by working as a waiter and bartender, Marvin is never ashamed to talk about his humble beginnings.

Today, not only is Marvin an accomplished young actor, he is also the president of his family-owned food corporation.

"Ever since I was a child, when I was asked what I want to be when I grew up, I wanted to be a businessman, but without any specific business in mind," Marvin shares. "My mom had a store at that time and every time I saw her with lots of money in her pocket, I would think of wanting to be like her."

Marvin's success story in the food business started after he was given a franchise of Mister Donut, as part of his contract for being the official endorser of the food chain. The franchise shop was initially set up at SM Fairview, near Marvin's house.

The business was registered with the Securities and Exchange Commission with the rather strange corporate name of Sixth Sense Food Corp.

"Yes, it's named after the movie," Marvin grants. "The first two names we initially chose were already registered. I had just watched 'Sixth Sense' at that time, so the title stuck.

"My sister was calling from the SEC and we needed a name right away. So when she said there was nothing yet with that name, I told her to use it."

Marvin's two sisters **Shirley Joy** and **Shirley May**, help him manage the business. "If I were alone, it would be impossible with my schedule and my commitments," Marvin says. "My sisters have been very helpful and hardworking. *Sila na rin ang* boss."

With the second store in Makati given to him by Mister Donut more than a year ago, Marvin had no choice but to expand his business.

They moved the outlet from SM Fairview and got a place at the corner of Quezon Avenue and Roces in Quezon City. The second floor has been converted into an office.

"We treat is as a family business," Marvin says. "I don't touch my business earnings. They go to the bank."

His outlet on De La Costa street in Makati, on the ground floor of Sagittarius Building, is a big daily earner from the time it opens at 7 a.m. to its closing time at 9 p.m.

"The people don't stop coming any time of the day," Marvin beams. "The sales for the day are enough to cover the monthly rent for the place.

"This is a fulfillment for me," he adds. "I'm glad I entered show biz because I was able to realize my dream of becoming a businessman.

"I never really imagined myself being an actor. I realize you can never really plan your life a hundred percent. This is the Lord's plan for me."

Selling donuts may be small business to some people, but it has given Marvin and his family a better life.

Marvin also put up Ricecapades, which sells stir-fried rice at the fast-food center of SM Fairview.

"It was my mom's idea to sell rice in different flavors — *bagoong, adobo*, Shanghai or *bistek*," Marvin says. "She is a great cook so the recipes come from her and they've been best-sellers."

Last month, Marvin celebrated his birthday with the less privileged children of Cribs Philippines. He makes it a point to celebrate his birthday with a charitable institution. The residents of Golden Acres in Alabang and the White Cross Orphanage in San Juan were witnesses to his generosity.

With Mister Donut executives, Marvin brought food and goodies for the kids and treated them to an afternoon of entertainment.

He sang and danced with the abused and special children. He ate with them and signed autographs. They in turn asked Marvin amusing questions, like about his "reel love" with young actress Jolina Magdangal.

"Sharing your blessings with others is good for the soul," Marvin maintains. "I feel very different when I get hugs and kisses from the orphans, the elderly and street kids."

The 21-year-old actor has many other dreams. His ultimate goal for now is to finish school. Next month, he is enrolling in mass communications at Thames International in Greenhills.

"Eventually, I also want to become a director. Mr. M (**Johnny Manahan**) has been my role model in show biz."

Marvin also dreams of owning a beach house one day.

You can e-mail Marvin at marvin-agustin@pinoycentral.com

Sheer fun. . .

(From page A20)

The consequence of an automobile crash is depicted simultaneously from three vantage points. Mickey gets floored in a boxing match but, instead of hitting the canvas, breaks through water then rebounds.

The characters are introduced through freeze-frame narrated prefaces and the phone conversations between them are done split-screen.

Ritchie the juggler

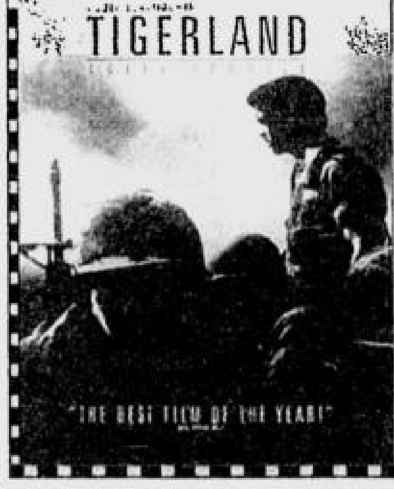
All of these may have been lifted right off MTV but Ritchie connects all of such scenes and make them look integral to the film and not just fancy appendages.

Perhaps, there lies Ritchie's strength. He can juggle several storylines and characters, deliberately creating a mess, but a very comical and ingenious mess that he smartly bundles up in the end.

I was wondering how in the world he was going to pull off the resolution, what with nothing ever going as planned in the entire film, but he did so with a flourish.

Hardly anyone saw "Lock, Stock . . ." when it premiered here last year. At least now, with several theaters running "Snatch," a lot more people would be able to get a taste of Ritchie's gift.

Perhaps, like me, they too won't mind if he keeps on making the same type of film.



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4 THE FAMILY MAN - P13 12:40, 2:50, 5:00, 7:30, 10:00	5 SNATCH - R18 12:45, 2:55, 5:05, 7:15, 9:30	6 MS. CONGENIALITY - G 1:00, 3:15, 5:30, 7:45, 10:00

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ENTERTAINMENT

LOUIE C. CAMINO, Editor

NO STARS. Pitt, second from left, is not the star of "Snatch," nor are the others.

'SNATCH'

Sheer fun—lock, stock and barrel

By RUBEN CRUZ JR.

I'M a fan of gangster films. And ever since I saw "The Godfather," I have tried to see every good one.

Sadly, except for a couple of John Woo classics from his Hong Kong days, my appetite for the genre has been fed almost exclusively by an American buffet because aside from the local flicks, those from Hollywood are more often than not the only other choices in our theaters, and even in our video rental shops.

Thankfully, the black crime comedy "Lock, Stock and Two Smoking Barrels" had a brief run at the Glorietta Art Film Cinema sometime last year. After seeing it, I was really hoping to catch another serving of the fascinating London underworld world its writer-director Guy Ritchie presented in the film (He's Scottish by the way and not a Brit). And although it is not a sequel, with "Snatch," Ritchie, again as writer-director, delivers what could very well be a second installment of his first venture.

REVIEW

A friend of mine who saw "Snatch" abroad was disgusted to find that it is the same kind of film "Lock, Stock . . ." is. Indeed, "Snatch" has the same type of quirky lowlifes, the same frenetic pacing, the same snappy dialogue (delivered in British, Scottish and Irish brogues) and almost every other element down to the freeze-frame shots and the narration.

But while my friend detested "Snatch" for being a rehash of its predecessor, I adored the film because of the same reason.

I don't mind if Ritchie dishes out the same stuff as long as it's still good. Coppola had his Godfather trilogy, John Woo has his trademark surrealistic action sequences, and even Robert Rodriguez's "Desperado" was just a more expensive, more commercial version of his "El Mariachi."

In a way, "Snatch" is also a more marketable version of "Lock, Stock . . ." because this time, Ritchie has more money to spend on the production and at least enough to bring in Hollywood stars Dennis Farina, Benicio del Toro and superstar Brad Pitt.

No stars

I'm sure a lot of women would flock to catch a screening of "Snatch" because of Pitt's presence. But mind you, he's not the star of this film. In fact, there are no stars in "Snatch."

What it has is a bunch of great characters coming together magically in crisscrossing plots and subplots.

With "Snatch" you've got Franky Four Fingers (Del Toro), a diamond thief with a gambling problem who starts the story rolling, a couple of unlicensed boxing promoters, Tommy and Turkish (Stephen Graham and Jason Statham), a former Russian KGB agent turned gangster named Boris the Blade (The Saint's Rade Sherbedgia), indestructible hitman Bullet Tooth Tony (British footballer Vinnie Jones), Brick Top (Alan Ford), a local kingpin with a penchant for dog fights and clever body disposals on his pig farm, an Italian-American jeweler pretending to be Jewish called Doug The Head (Mike Reid) and his cousin Avi (Farina), a New York Mafia boss, and many more off-centered personalities.

Really, who could refuse a gangster film with such characters? Each character has a colorful substory, which could probably inspire a movie of its own. In the course of the film, Ritchie does well to inspire a certain rooting interest for each of them.

You get to pick sides when the tough guys square off, and till the end, one keeps second-guessing who would come out victorious.

Memorable Pitt

Although playing a secondary role, the film lights up when Pitt enters the fray. He plays Mickey O' Neil a wildcard Irish gypsy boxer from a trailer park community of Irish gypsies who is lured by Turkish and Tommy into the rough and tumble world of unlicensed boxing. The boxing scenes provide some of the best highlights of the film and the fate of Pitt's character becomes essential to the final outcome of the winding tale.

Not since his performance as the sexy hitchhiker in "Thelma and Louise" has Pitt agreed to play a supporting role, but he will be remembered in "Snatch" perhaps even more than some of his leads in other movies. (Pitt reportedly called Ritchie immediately after the US premiere of "Lock Stock . . ." and requested a meeting in order for him to be included in "Snatch," even for much lesser pay.)

All the actors in "Snatch," however, down to the extras, bring a wonderful larger-than-life but at the same time realistic quality to the hard men they play and the London villainy in which they operate.

They are helped a great deal by some of the wittiest lines and expositions I've ever heard in a film, such as Brick Top's monologue on why feeding the carcasses of his victims to hungry pigs is the best way to dispose of them, or Bullet Tooth's deadpan intimidation of the bumbling gangsters Vinnie (Robby Gee), Sol (Lennie James) and Tyron (Ade). Both men deliver the verbiage as if they were ordering a pint of milk from a grocery.

Creative visuals

Ritchie started out making commercials and music videos and it's obvious that he employs his talents in those fields to full use in "Lock, Stock . . ." and "Snatch," making the two movies very hip to today's audiences. His innovative camera angles and track shots are just right for the energy and the pace of a film that seems to glide on momentum.

He gives the audience a treat with some very creative editing and visuals. The diamond heist is tracked from the perspective of several video security cameras. Franky Four Fingers' gambling addiction is shown via montage. Cousin Avi's transatlantic commute from New York to London and vice versa is established hilariously three times, all in less than ten seconds.

SHEER/A19

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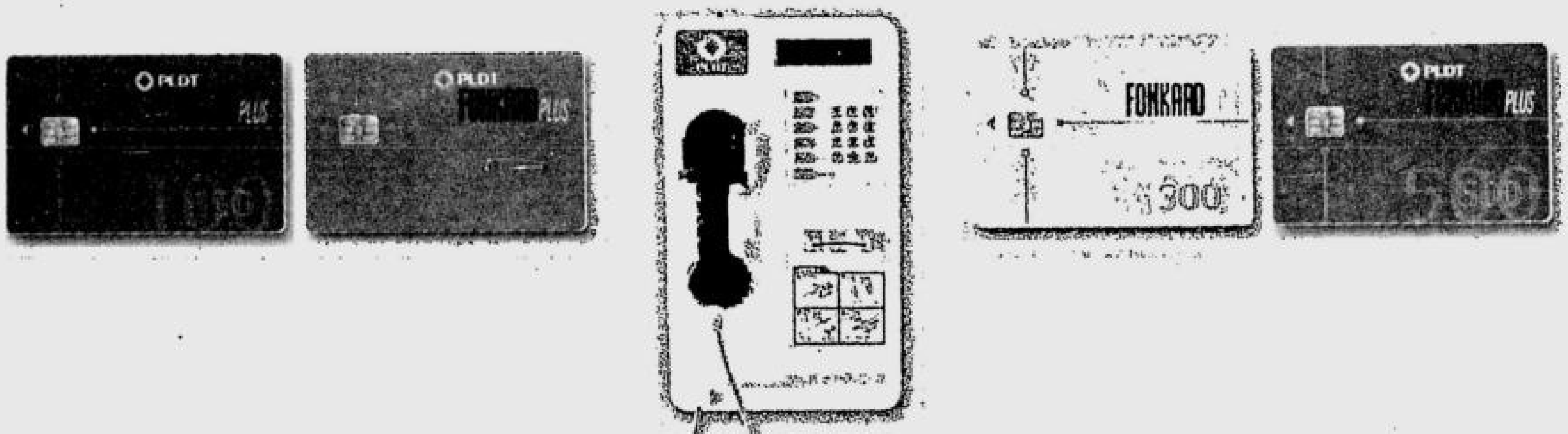

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T-bill rates ease; bond auction suspended

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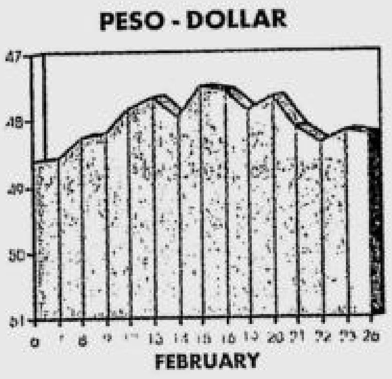

GRAPHS BY RONNIE CABUANG

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¥116.11 = $1
The US dollar was trading at 116.11 as of 5 p.m., Feb. 26, 2001

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STOCK MARKET

Stocks end down

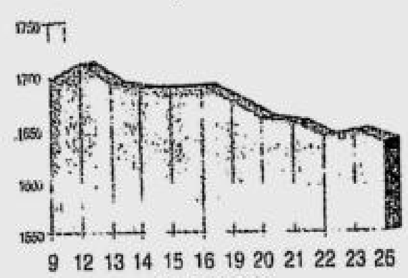
STOCKS moved back into negative territory yesterday, reversing Friday's gains, as ongoing concerns about the outcome of a Supreme Court decision on the presidency continued to weigh on sentiment.

The political worries and a general lack of fresh leads resulted in lackluster trading levels with turnover reaching just P486.4 million, down from P592.06 million on Friday.

"The overriding concern is still the question regarding (the legitimacy of)

STOCKS/ B2

PSE Composite Index



(See stock market report on Page B2)

BY CLARISSA S. BATINO

NATIONAL Treasurer Sergio Edeza yesterday extended by another two weeks the suspension of treasury bond auctions as he accused banks of bidding up interest rates and passing the cost of their inefficiencies to the government.

"We will scrap the bond auction until we are convinced that rates are low enough. Banks should recompute their liquidity premium and warehousing costs," Edeza said.

He said the Treasury would just re-issue two-year bonds through over-the-counter deals today.

A market practitioner, Edeza was senior vice president for treasury of the Metrobank Group before he was appointed to head the Bureau of Treasury by the Macapagal administration.

Treasury bill rates continued to move down for the ninth straight week yesterday although the decline was a modest 0.07 percentage point for the 91-day bills to 10.456 percent from 10.525 percent.

Longer tenors also eased slightly to 11.783 percent from 11.9 percent for the six-month bills and to 12.497 percent from 12.5 percent for the one-year treasury bills.

Edeza said he expected deeper cuts in the government's borrowing rate over the medium term particularly if the US Federal Reserve brings down its key short-term rate by another half a percentage point, or to 5 percent, in March.

In the near term, however, Edeza said he believed treasury bill yields would stay flat until after the Bangko Sentral ng Pilipinas has cut its rates further.

The Bangko Sentral said it would wait for improvements on the inflation front and the US Fed decision to drag rates down from the current 11 percent for overnight borrowing and 13.25 percent for overnight lending.

"Rates could move up or down by five to 10 points in the coming weeks," Edeza said.

The national treasurer had planned to suspend treasury bond trading only for two weeks. Yesterday, he said the bond auction would be scrapped for a month starting today.

The government borrows P7 billion weekly from the market, of which P4 billion is raised from the auction of treasury bills every Monday and P3 billion from treasury bonds every Tuesday.

Edeza accused banks of bidding up bond rates by passing the cost of their inefficiencies to the government.

He said the government pays a liquidity premium or the cost incurred as the tenor increases. For instance, the cost of increased tenor from a one-year instrument against a five-year paper was about two percentage points.

Aside from this, Edeza noted that banks input in their bids the cost of warehousing or the cost of holding on to government securities. "This is a cost of their inefficiencies, they should not pass this on to us," he said.

A five-year treasury bond carried an interest rate of 14.5 percent versus a one-year treasury bill rate of 12.45 percent.

"They should be dealer distributors not dealer warehousers. They should help the government in distributing government securities as widely as possible," Edeza stressed.

Samsung to invest ₱1.9B in new RP factory

BY GIL C. CABACUNGAN JR.

SOUTH Korean electronics giant Samsung Electronic Co. Ltd. is pumping in P1.9 billion into the Philippines this year to put a second factory in Laguna to manufacture electronic products, initially compact disc rewritable drive.

Samsung, through Philippine Samsung Electronics Corp., will build its factory on 1.8-hectare at the Calamba Premier Industrial Park (CPIP) special economic zone.

The project is expected to create 1,141 new jobs and annual export earnings of $709 million. Its output will be shipped to Europe, the United States and other Asian countries.

The Philippine Economic Zone Authority said Samsung's new investment reflected the continued bullishness of multinational electronic companies in the Philippines as a manufacturing facility for electronic components.

It said the resumption in overseas investments of Samsung also showed that the South Korean economy has already recovered from the Asian financial crisis in 1997 which would mean more investments from South Korean businessmen.

The disk drive project will be built next to Samsung's $65-million facility, which manufactures multilayer chip capacitors and thick film resistors.

The existing plant, built in 1998, is being managed by Samsung Electro-Mechanics Philippines Corp.

The plant will start producing electrolytic condensers and multilayer boards starting this year. Its sales are expected to grow to $300 million this year from $100 million in 1999.

Samsung joins a number of major regional players who had sought incentives for their expansion projects since the administration of President Macapagal-Arroyo took over last month.

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NDC to invest Erap bonds proceeds in IFC projects

BY GIL C. CABACUNGAN JR.

THE NATIONAL Development Co. will piggyback on the International Finance Corp.'s venture capital projects in the Philippines using funds to be raised from the Erap (or Economic Recovery through Agricultural Productivity) bonds.

This was revealed by Trade Secretary Manuel A. Roxas II who said that the Erap bonds would not only be renamed but its terms would also be revised to expand its investment scope and make its maturity period longer.

Roxas said the new administration was keen on using up the entire mandate to raise up to P50 billion from the Erap bonds. Only P5 billion was raised from a bond issue in 1999. "It goes without saying that we have to change the name of the bonds."

Roxas said NDC had agreed to join IFC—the World Bank's private investment arm—in investing in Philippine venture capital projects in order to speed up the use of the Erap bonds and to gain experience in choosing viable business prospects before going solo.

NDC would take minority positions in IFC-led projects where Roxas said the government agency would have a better chance of profiting or recovering its investments.

NDC has been unable to deploy the P5 billion raised from the Erap bonds because it lacked the expertise in assessing the feasibility of a project. This is why the NDC allocated P2 billion of the funds to Land Bank of the Philippines and P1 billion to the Development Bank of the Philippines that have the experience and capability to make intelligent investment decisions.

Roxas said the NDC was likely to join IFC's equity investments in small and medium enterprises. IFC officials had earlier committed to invest $100 million in at least six projects in the country.

Roxas said NDC would have to change the terms of the Erap bonds to enable them to invest in areas outside of agriculture. Also, Roxas said NDC should also make the terms of the Erap bonds more flexible in order to accommodate any potential project regardless of gestation period.

Roxas said it was difficult for the NDC to choose its projects because it has to liquidate its investments before 2004 and its investments should be limited to agriculture (where the gestation period is longer and returns are modest). Roxas said the Erap bonds could be issued in the form of long-term convertible loans in keeping with the terms of the Erap bonds which mandate that the proceeds be used as equity investment and not as loans.

Napocor to sell idle assets in 2nd quarter

BY CHRISTINE A. GAYLICAN

NATIONAL Power Corp. will start selling in the second quarter idle assets worth about P22 billion.

Napocor president Jesus N. Alcordo said the assets to be sold include pieces of prime land in Makati City, Sucat, Intramuros and Quezon City; an 11-seater aircraft and certain power plants.

The power plants to be disposed of are the mothballed diesel and bunker oil-fired plants in Talavera, General Santos and Aplaya, which are estimated to fetch at least $50 million.

"We may also give up thermal power plants such as the Manila 1 and 2 and the facilities in Sucat to enhance the company's asset base in case the privatization plan will push through this year." Alcordo said in a press briefing.

However, Alcordo said the agency was still evaluating whether it should sell the remaining oil thermal plants in operation such as the Sucat 3 and 4 and Malaya 1.

"We want to make sure first that we will not have power interruptions particularly in Luzon," he said.

In the same briefing, Alcordo said the power firm recorded a cash deficit of P16 billion as its dollar-denominated debt obligations ballooned due to the peso fall.

Also, he said that Napocor's electricity sales dropped mainly due to the decline in Manila Electric Co.'s purchases from the government power agency.

PDIC projects fewer bank failures this year

BY ELENA R. TORRIJOS

NAZARENO

THE STATE-OWNED Philippine Deposit Insurance Corp. said it was expecting fewer cases of bank failures this year compared to last year's record with the country's improved economic prospects.

Cases of bank failures this year would likely be much less than the 24 registered last year, PDIC president Norberto Nazareno said in an interview.

He said PDIC had to shell out P3.3 billion to pay insured deposits last year due to the collapse of these 24 banks.

Of the total deposits paid, the Rural Bank of San Miguel in Bulacan accounted for P500 million.

Closed Urban Bank, which was larger in terms of resources, accounted for only P370 million because it had lesser deposit accounts but with larger values.

Last year's record of bank failures was better than the previous year that saw the collapse of 33 banks.

Of the 24 banks that closed last year, 19 were rural banks, one was a commercial bank (Urban Bank) and the rest were thrift banks.

Nazareno said that the PDIC has so far closed three banks such as Binondo-based Jade Savings Bank, and rural banks Dingle Bank in Iloilo and Canaman Bank in Bicol.

Nazareno said that a group of investors was emerging as a possible white knight for Jade Bank.

The PDIC has 90 days to decide whether to rehabilitate or liquidate the savings bank.

The PDIC has also discovered about P400 million in unrecorded deposits in Jade. The bank reportedly failed because of mismanagement.

Lower inflation rate seen

CONSUMER prices should average below 6 percent this year on the back of declining local interest rates and stable food supplies, Socioeconomic Planning Secretary Dante Canlas said yesterday.

Last month, Canlas said consumer prices should rise by about 6-7 percent in 2001 against 4.4 percent last year.

"I think we can over-perform that to slightly below 6 percent," he told reporters on the sidelines of conference on e-banking.

"The trend from January inflation shows a slowdown, from 6.9 percent in January to about 6.6 percent in February."

Canlas said he also did not expect high oil prices to "exert a large impact on general price level" in the country.

Meantime, the National Statistics Office said the country's manufacturing output rose 14 percent last year.

The volume of production index grew 14 percent compared to 3.5 percent the previous year. The economy grew 3.9 percent in 2000.

Electrical machinery, petroleum refineries and paper and paper products led growth in the manufacturing sector last year amid increased demand. Production lines for electrical machinery were also expanded.

Food manufacturing, as well as production of transport equipment, chemicals, textiles, rubber products, beverages and tobacco fell amid slower demand, lack of raw materials, machinery breakdowns, labor disputes and manpower reductions. *Reuters, AFP*

Stocks end down

(From page B1)

President Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo's administration . . . this is a nagging problem and something that has to be put to rest . . . a decision has to be made with some finality," Vincent Lazatin, vice president of World Wide Investment Management Co. of the Philippines, said.

The main index closed down 10.96 points or 0.67 percent at 1,636.04 points.

"It (the weak market performance) is more of the same concerns . . . the Supreme Court decision, the legitimacy of Arroyo's government and the upcoming congressional elections in May . . . people are just not taking fresh positions," BPI Securities Inc. senior investment analyst Spencer Yap said.

"The low turnover is likely to last until May . . . people will want to see the makeup of Congress," he added.

Yap said he saw further downward bias on Tuesday and for the rest of the week with the next support level on the main index seen at 1,600 points. *Reuters*

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(As of Monday, February 26, 2001)

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BANKS					
Asiatrust Dev. Bank Inc.	7	7	7	7	7,000
Banco Filipino Sav & Mort	120	120	120	120	270
Bank of the Phil. Islands	70	70	69.5	69.5	78,000
Equitable PCI Bank Inc.	55	55.5	55	55.5	20,800
Global Business Bank Inc	68	68	68	68	400
Metropolitan Bank & Trust	230	230	215	218	67,950
Philippine National Bank	40	40.5	38.5	40	504,600
Security Bank Corp.	23.75	23.75	23.75	23.75	600
Union Bank of the Phil.	27.5	27.5	27.5	27.5	8,800
FINANCIAL SERVICE					
Bankard Inc.	1.6	1.6	1.6	1.6	60,000
Manulife Financial Corp.	1100	1180	1100	1180	4,460
Sun Life Financial Serv.	960	965	960	965	7,950
COMMERCIAL & INDUSTRIAL					
COMMUNICATION					
ABS-CBN Broadcasting Corp.	49.5	49.5	48.5	48.5	13,600
Digital Telecom Phils Inc.	0.66	0.66	0.66	0.66	480,000
Globe Telecom Inc.	710	710	700	700	350
Island Info and Tech Inc.	0.05	0.05	0.05	0.05	100,000
Manila Bulletin Pub. Corp.	3.8	3.8	3.8	3.8	10,000
Phil. Long Dis Tel Co.	820	820	815	815	35,820
Ivantage Corp.	1.06	1.1	1.06	1.1	221,000
Philweb.Com Inc.	0.075	0.075	0.07	0.07	56,000,000
POWER & ENERGY					
Manila Electric Co. A	52.5	53	52.5	53	5,800
Manila Electric Co. B	62	62.5	61.5	62	871,600
Petron Corporation	1.94	1.96	1.92	1.92	1,748,000
Trans-Asia Oil and Energy	0.95	0.95	0.91	0.91	20,000
TRANSPORTATION SERVICES					
Asian Terminals Inc.	1.14	1.14	1.1	1.1	331,000
Int'l Container Term'l Sv	1.38	1.38	1.38	1.38	401,000
CONSTRUCTION & OTHER RELATED PRODUCTS					
Alsons Cement Corp.	0.2	0.25	0.2	0.25	1,160,000
Republic Glass Hldg. Corp.	0.85	0.85	0.85	0.85	20,000
Union Cement Corp	0.87	0.87	0.87	0.87	10,000
FOOD, BEVERAGES & TOBACCO					
Alaska Milk Corp.	2.1	2.1	2.1	2.1	3,000
Jollibee Foods Corp.	11.5	11.75	11.5	11.5	97,100
La Tondena Distillers Inc.	38	38	38	38	209,000
RFM Corp.	1.3	1.3	1.28	1.3	268,000
San Miguel Corp. A	49.5	50.5	49.5	50.5	33,400
San Miguel Corp. B	59	59.5	59	59.5	48,000
Universal Robina Corp.	5.5	5.5	5.5	5.5	11,178,000
Vitarich Corp.	0.5	0.5	0.5	0.5	100,000
HOLDING FIRMS					
Abacus Con Res & Hdg A	0.57	0.57	0.57	0.57	60,000
Ayala Corp.	8	8	7.9	7.9	1,034,000
Alsons Cons. Res. Inc.	0.25	0.25	0.25	0.25	20,000
Aboitiz Equity Ventures	1.56	1.6	1.56	1.6	70,000
Alliance Global Group Inc.	12	12.25	11.75	12	1,800
A. Soriano Corp.	0.28	0.28	0.28	0.28	110,000
APC Group Inc.	0.25	0.26	0.24	0.24	1,520,000
Alcorn Gold Res. Corp.	0.0075	0.0075	0.0075	0.0075	36,000,000
ATN Holdings Inc.	2.9	2.9	2.9	2.9	40,000
Baguio Gold Holdings Corp.	1.98	1.98	1.98	1.98	10,000
Balabac Resources & Hldgs	0.39	0.39	0.36	0.36	30,000
Boulevard Holdings Inc.	0.23	0.24	0.23	0.23	250,000
Benpres Holdings Corp.	3.15	3.15	3.1	3.1	816,000
Basic Consolidated Inc.	0.185	0.185	0.185	0.185	220,000
Ebecom Holdings Inc.	0.16	0.16	0.16	0.16	100,000
Filinvest Dev. Corp.	1.46	1.48	1.42	1.46	750,000
F&J Prince Holdings Corp.	0.94	0.94	0.94	0.94	10,000
First Phil Hldgs Corp.	23.5	23.5	23.25	23.25	128,000
Global Equities Inc.	0.36	0.36	0.36	0.36	760,000
Guoco Holdings (Phils.)	0.24	0.24	0.23	0.23	720,000
Ionics Inc.	13.25	13.75	13.25	13.75	2,500
J.G. Summit Holdings Inc.	2.75	2.75	2.75	2.75	1,997,000
Macroasia Corp.	2	2	2	2	3,000
Megaworld Corp.	0.92	0.93	0.92	0.93	320,000
Multitech Inv. Corp.	0.4	0.4	0.39	0.39	2,200,000
Metro Pacific Corp.	0.64	0.64	0.63	0.63	1,200,000
Solid Group Inc.	0.74	0.74	0.74	0.74	1,480,000
Unioil Res. & Holdings Co.	0.15	0.15	0.15	0.15	20,000
Uniwide Holdings Inc.	0.39	0.39	0.38	0.38	1,100,000
Waterfront Phils. Inc.	0.29	0.3	0.29	0.3	630,000
MANUFACTURING, DISTRIBUTION & TRADING					
Corro-Coat Inc.	1.42	1.42	1.42	1.42	60,000
Music Corp.	3.1	3.1	3.1	3.1	115,000
Mabuhay Vinyl Corp.	0.81	0.81	0.81	0.81	400,000
SPI Technologies Inc.	13.25	13.25	13	13	272,900
Steniel Manufacturing	0.6	0.6	0.6	0.6	10,000
HOTEL, RECREATION & OTHER SERVICE					
Belle Corp.	0.62	0.62	0.62	0.62	200,000
Fairmont Holdings Inc.	0.68	0.69	0.67	0.68	1,850,000
Leisure & Resorts Corp.	0.68	0.68	0.68	0.68	350,000
Manila Jockey Club	17	17.5	17	17.5	76,800
Philippine Racing Club	4.5	4.5	4.5	4.5	3,000
BONDS, PREFERRED & WARRANTS					
ABS-CBN Hldgs. Corp. (Pdr)	50.5	51	50.5	51	3,810,500
Ayala Corp. Pref.	1.14	1.14	1.14	1.14	80,000
Equitable PCI Bank-War	3.9	4	3.9	4	377,000
Jollibee Warrants	11.25	11.25	11.25	11.25	9,100
Omico Corporation Warrant	0.0032	0.0032	0.0032	0.0032	81,000,000
PLDT (10% Pref) Series T	10.25	10.25	10.25	10.25	500
PLDT (10% Pref.) Series U	10.25	10.25	10.25	10.25	1,400
PLDT (10% Pref) Series V	10.25	10.25	10.25	10.25	200
PLDT (10% Pref) Series W	10.25	10.25	10.25	10.25	700
PLDT (10% Pref) Series Y	10.25	10.25	10.25	10.25	100
PLDT (10% Pref) Series Z	10.25	10.25	10.25	10.25	1,000
PROPERTY					
Ayala Land Inc.	6.6	6.6	6.5	6.5	2,014,000
C & P Homes Inc.	0.33	0.33	0.33	0.33	1,540,000
Empire East Land Inc.	0.42	0.42	0.42	0.42	4,810,000
Filinvest Land Inc.	2.85	2.95	2.85	2.95	5,771,000
Keppel Phils. Prop. Inc.	1	1.28	1	1.28	160,000
MRC Allied Ind. Inc.	0.44	0.44	0.41	0.41	320,000
SM Prime Holdings Inc.	7.2	7.2	7.2	7.2	1,449,000
Universal Rightfield Prop	0.115	0.115	0.115	0.115	450,000
MINING					
Atlas Cons. Min & Dev't	1.4	1.4	1.4	1.4	1,000
Lepanto Cons Mng. Co. A	0.215	0.22	0.21	0.22	1,310,000
Lepanto Cons. Mng. Co B	0.23	0.23	0.23	0.23	1,740,000
Manila Mining Corp. A	0.0065	0.0065	0.0065	0.0065	26,000,000
Manila Mining Corp. B	0.0065	0.0065	0.0065	0.0065	150,000,000
Omico Corp.	0.0042	0.0042	0.0042	0.0042	41,000,000
Philex Mining Corp. A	0.215	0.215	0.215	0.215	10,000
OIL					
Imperial Res.	0.028	0.028	0.028	0.028	700,000
Interport Res.	0.006	0.006	0.006	0.006	1,000,000
Oriental Pet. & Min. A	0.005	0.005	0.005	0.005	77,000,000
Oriental Pet. & Min. B	0.005	0.005	0.005	0.005	63,000,000
The Philodrill Corp. A	0.25	0.25	0.25	0.25	10,000
Pacifica	0.019	0.019	0.019	0.019	500,000
Sinophil Corp.	0.1	0.1	0.1	0.1	30,000
Vulcan Ind'l	0.245	0.25	0.245	0.25	200,000

	SHARES	VALUE (P)
Banks & Fin Svc	760,830	54,823,790.00
Comm'l & Ind'l	213,585,170	396,956,190.00
PRO	16,514,000	43,578,650.00
Mining	220,061,000	2,006,850.00
OIL	142,440,000	790,100.00
GRAND TOTALS :	593,361,000	498,165,580.00

AVERAGES			
Banks & Fin Svc	606.26	DOWN	6.27
Comm'l & Ind'l	2,227.66	DOWN	18.42
PRO	641.67	DOWN	4.16
Mining	1,370.28	UP	39.07
OIL	1.90	DOWN	0.06
All Shares Index	764.39	UP	1.74
Composite	1,636.04	DOWN	10.96

NO. OF ADVANCES: 15; NO. OF DECLINES: 53; NO. OF UNCHANGED: 43; NO. OF TRADED ISSUES: 111; NO. OF TRADES: 1,714

DISCLOSURES

FIL-HISPANO will hold its annual stockholders' meeting on May 3, 3 p.m. at the Metropolitan Club, Makati City. Record date is on March 26.

* * *

ABOITIZ Equity Ventures Inc. will hold its annual stockholders' meeting on May 15, 4 p.m. at the Ballroom of Cebu City Marriott Hotel. Stockholders of record as of March 30 will be entitled to vote and to notice of the said meeting.

* * *

F&J Prince Holdings Corp. will have a special stockholders' meeting on March 16 with the record date set on March 9.

* * *

UNION Bank declared a P0.16 per share cash dividend in favor of shareholders as of Dec. 31, 2000.

* * *

ELECTED directors of **Cyber Bay Corp.** were Ramon Ang, Micky Mee Swee Yong, Lorenzo Tan, Federico Cadiz, David Go, Felipe Yap, Mario Surio, Victor Say, Ramon Sy, Emmanuel Sy, Premohai Kamasuta, Pathai Chakombundit, Juanito Uy, Louis Coson and Reynaldo Arcilla.

* * *

THE BOARD of **Manila Broadcasting Corp.** approved the debt to equity infusion amounting to P150 million by the following entities: Elizalde Holdings Corp., P85 million; Cebu Broadcasting Co., P50 million; Sunshine Inns Inc., P10 million and Philippine Broadcasting Co., P5 million.

* * *

BAGUIO Gold Holdings Corp. clarified that no definite plan has been made for the company to acquire a controlling stake in Philippine Airlines. *Compiled by Maricar D. Tolosa, PDI Research*

CURRENCIES

Feb. 26, 2001 Country	Unit	Euro Equivalent	Foreign currency in US$	Foreign currency in Peso
United States	Dollar	1.090394	1.000000	48.3230
Japan	Yen	0.009420	0.008639	0.4175
United Kingdom	Pound	1.585214	1.453800	70.2520
Hong Kong	Dollar	0.139797	0.128208	6.1954
Switzerland	Franc	0.650981	0.597015	28.8496
Canada	Dollar	0.709707	0.650872	31.4521
Singapore	Dollar	0.625225	0.573394	27.7081
Australia	Dollar	0.568653	0.521512	25.2010
Bahrain	Dinar	2.892445	2.652661	128.1845
Saudi Arabia	Rial	0.290740	0.266638	12.8847
Brunei	Dollar	0.623438	0.571755	27.6289
Indonesia	Rupiah	0.000112	0.000103	0.0050
Thailand	Baht	0.025364	0.023261	1.1240
UAE	Dirham	0.296908	0.272294	13.1581
Korea	Won	0.000873	0.000801	0.0387
Euro	Euro	1.000000	0.917100	44.3170
Germany	Mark	0.511292	0.468906	22.6589
France	Franc	0.152450	0.139811	6.7561
Netherlands	Guilder	0.453780	0.416162	20.1102
Austria	Schilling	0.072673	0.066648	3.2206
Belgium	Franc	0.024789	0.022734	1.0986
Italy	Lire	0.000517	0.000474	0.0229
Finland	Markka	0.168188	0.154245	7.4536
Portugal	Escudo	0.004987	0.004574	0.2210
Spain	Peseta	0.006010	0.005512	0.2664
Luxemburg	Franc	0.024789	0.022734	1.0986
Ireland	Punt	1.269738	1.164477	56.2710

Oil prices seen up ₱0.19 in March

By Ronnel W. Domingo

THE CONSUMER and Oil Price Watch said yesterday oil prices could increase next month by about 19 centavos a liter.

COPW chair Raul Concepcion told reporters the hike "will likely take effect on March 17."

In computing the amount, Concepcion took into account increases in world crude prices, the peso's appreciation against the US dollar, the 3-percent tariff on oil imports, and a 32-centavo-per-liter surcharge he said was slapped by the country's oil companies.

He said an increase in world crude prices from January to February and the 3-percent tariff on refined petroleum would jack up oil prices by 26 centavos and 25 centavos a liter, respectively. But since oil firms owed consumers 32 centavos a liter, prices should increase by only 19 centavos per liter instead of 51 centavos.

Concepcion said the price of Dubai crude—the benchmark used for local petroleum prices—probably rose from $22.85 per barrel last month to $24.93 per barrel this month.

He said this increase would be tempered by the peso's appreciation against the dollar. The local currency had risen by about 2.68 against the greenback to 48.25 this month from last month's 50.93.

Concepcion said if the average price of Dubai crude goes down to $24.50, "there may be no price increase."

"There may even be a price reduction" if not for the 3-percent tariff on refined petroleum, he said.

The government restored the 3-percent tariff on imported crude and refined petroleum products on Feb. 8, prompting Caltex Philippines Inc. to raise its fuel prices by 5 centavos per liter.

Industry rivals Petron Corp. and Pilipinas Shell Petroleum Corp. have yet to follow suit.

The previous administration lifted the 3-percent tariff on Nov. 8 to temper oil price and transport fare increases at that time.

The move was criticized as part of efforts by then President Joseph Estrada to shore up public support amid calls for his resignation over allegations that he had received millions of pesos in "jueteng" payoffs and tax kickbacks.

The three-month suspension of the tariff had cut fuel prices by 30 centavos per liter but cost the government about P1.2 billion, according to the Department of Energy.

Oil companies in the country were poised to raise prices by 73 centavos per liter last November.

But the increase was reduced to 44 centavos after the government lifted the 3-percent tariff.

But after that, the prices of Dubai crude and imported refined petroleum products went down.

On Jan. 8, Petron, Shell and Caltex cut gasoline prices by 60 centavos per liter and diesel and kerosene by 50 centavos.

Had the prices of Dubai crude and imported refined petroleum products continued to decline, a second round of fuel price reduction would have been implemented in the last week of January.

But crude prices began rising again after the Organization of Petroleum Exporting Countries decided to cut its production by another 1.5 million barrels a day.

As of Feb. 19, the price of Dubai crude, the country's benchmark, was $25.35 a barrel.

Since the beginning of the year, the price of gasoline from Singapore has risen by more than 22 percent and that of diesel by 10 percent.

As for the exchange rate, the peso strengthened to P48.303 against the dollar on Feb. 19 after depreciating to P50.93 in January. The rate was P49.92 in December.

JG says talks with Equitable preliminary

By Clarissa S. Batino

JG SUMMIT Holdings Inc. said yesterday it held preliminary discussions with the financial adviser of Equitable PCI Bank for a possible investment in the bank.

"We confirm that we have had discussions with ING Barings on a purely preliminary and exploratory basis," it said in a statement to the Philippine Stock Exchange.

"We, however, deny that we have ever offered to purchase the shares of the selling shareholders in Equitable PCI Bank. We have no knowledge of any pre-qualification by ING Barings," it added.

JG Summit made the disclosure after an industry source told reporters last week it was included in the list of prospective firms that expressed interest to invest in Equitable.

Equitable PCI Bank said last week it was studying proposals to sell a 20- to 35-percent stake, and that nine investors had expressed interest.

An industry source said ING Barings, the adviser helping the bank seek foreign investments, presented a shortlist that included JG Summit, US-based Newbridge Capital Inc, and Taiwan's Fubon Group, the source said.

JG Summit, the flagship company of the Gokongwei group which has interests in property, retail, food, petrochemical and banking, also denied newspaper reports last week it was tying up with the Fubon group of Taiwan for its bid in Equitable.

The Gokongwei group used to own about 35 percent of Equitable PCI Bank prior to its merger with Equitable.

The Bangko Sentral ng Pilipinas, meanwhile, announced that out of the P30 billion it extended to Equitable PCI Bank, less than P10 billion remained outstanding.

The central bank acknowledged that assistance to Equitable PCI Bank reached up to P30 billion from late last year to early this year but none of the loans were tapped from the emergency loan window.

Equitable PCI Bank officials clarified the loans were all tapped from the central bank's rediscount facility, a window that requires banks to surrender government securities as collateral compared to the emergency loan window that requires more stringent forms of collateral.

'Tiger Bobby' wants secrecy law reviewed

By Doris C. Dumlao

FORMER Finance Secretary Roberto de Ocampo has asked the Macapagal administration to amend bank secrecy rules and revive the Economic Intelligence and Investigation Bureau as an anti-money laundering agency.

"We must revisit bank secrecy, not totally lift it, but allow the government to look at deposits on a case-to-case basis," De Ocampo, who now heads the Asian Institute of Management, said.

As finance secretary, De Ocampo attempted to include amendments to the bank secrecy law as a component of the comprehensive tax reform program. This move was, however, blocked by Congress.

It was also during De Ocampo's term that the International Monetary Fund and the World Bank pressed for changes to the bank secrecy law so that the Bangko Sentral ng Pilipinas and the Philippine Deposit Insurance Corp. could better supervise and detect failing banks.

"During our term, we also began the establishment of a special law enforcement unit specializing on economic crimes, the EIIB. This might deserve a second look," he said.

The Philippines has been placed in an international watch list of countries regarded as havens for money laundering.

These countries, cited by the 29-nation Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development as "non-cooperating nations," face a July 31, 2001, deadline to clean up their act.

Some of these nations have already experienced harsh measures. Nauru, which has been accused of providing more than 400 banks registered to a single mail box to launder Russian mafia money, and Niue which has given a Panamanian law firm the right to run its tax haven, have both been isolated from the world banking systems.

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Partial List	02/26/2001	Share Swapping: Please Call	
CLUBS	ASKED Price	CLUBS	BID Price
BAGUIO CC	800,000	ALABANG "A"	1,800,000
CALATAGAN "B"	110,000	ALABANG "B"	1,850,000
CAMP JOHN HAY	400,000	BAGUIO CC	775,000
CC @ TAGAYTAY	490,000	EAGLERIDGE "A"	350,000
EASTRIDGE	240,000	MANILA GOLF (CORP.)	16,000,000
EAGLERIDGE "B"	600,000	MANILA POLO CLUB	3,000,000
EVERCREST "A"	190,000	MANILA SOUTHWOODS "A"	850,000
LUISITACC "A"	620,000	ORCHARD "A"	290,000
MAKATI SPORTS CLUB "A"	430,000	QUEZON CITY SPORTS "A"	225,000
METROPOLITAN CLUB "A"	170,000	RIVIERA "A"	250,000
MT. MALARAYAT "C"	1,100,000	TAGAYTAY HIGHLANDS GOLF	1,100,000
PUERTO AZUL "A"	145,000	TAGAYTAY MIDLANDS	850,000
STA. ELENA "B"	CALL NOW!	VALLE VERDE	170,000
TAGAYTAY MIDLANDS	925,000	WACK WACK GOLF	9,000,000

AVAILABLE LESSORS FOR PLAYING RIGHTS

ALABANG CC "A"	30,000	STA. ELENA "A"	70,000
MAKATI SPORTS	45,000	TAGAYTAY GOLF	65,000
MANILA GOLF (ASSIGNEE)	500,000/yr.	TAGAYTAY MIDLANDS	40,000
MANILA SOUTHWOODS "A"	50,000	WACK WACK	100,000

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Blast fishing can be stopped by something more powerful.

Public opinion.

The Inquirer joins the World Wildlife Fund in the fight to save rare animals. From now on you'll be reading more and learning more about the plight of endangered species. In our crusade to save the world, the only weapon we have is your support.
WWF
INQUIRER

COUNTRY SHARES
As of February 27, 2001

	BUYING	SELLING
ALABANG COUNTRY CLUB A	1,750,000	-
BAGUIO COUNTRY CLUB	750,000	800,000
CALATAGAN	100,000	110,000
CAMP JOHN HAY	-	350,000
CANYON WOODS	-	Please call
CAPITOL HILLS	115,000	120,000
CELEBRITY SPORTS	200,000	215,000
CLUB FILIPINO	300,000	350,000
EAGLE RIDGE A/B*/C**	400,000	400,000/500,000*/700,000**
EVERCREST A/B*	130,000*	150,000/170,000*
FANTASY WORLD	-	Please call
FONTANA D/C*/B**	120,000*	92,500/150,000*/280,000**
FOREST HILLS A/B*/C**	290,000	300,000/420,000*/450,000**
MAKATI SPORTS A/B*	400,000	450,000/625,000*
MT. MALARAYAT A/C (with lot)*	400,000	425,000/2.0 M*
MANILA POLO CLUB	3,100,000	Please call
MANILA SOUTHWOODS A/B*	850,000/900,000*	-
METROPOLITAN A/B*	160,000/160,000*	180,000
MIMOSA IND./CORP.*	200,000/350,000*	240,000/550,000*
ORCHARD A/B* C**	300,000/600,000**	330,000/425,000*
PHILIPPINE COLUMBIAN	80,000	90,000
PUERTO AZUL A/B*	130,000	140,000/Please call*
QUEZON CITY SPORTS CLUB	230,000	250,000
RIVIERA A/B*	280,000	310,000/420,000*
ROYALE TAGAYTAY A/B*	-	130,000/150,000*
SHERWOOD HILLS A/B*/C**	250,000	275,000/350,000*/450,000**
SUBIC BAY IND/CORP.	Please call	Please call
TAT FILIPINAS GOLF A/B*	300,000	350,000/550,000*
TAGAYTAY HIGHLANDS CC	500,000	525,000
TAGAYTAY HIGHLANDS GOLF	1,100,000	1,200,000
TAGAYTAY MIDLANDS	850,000	900,000
VALLE VERDE IND.	180,000	190,000
VALLEY GOLF	330,000	-
WACK WACK	8.5M	-

Available Lessors for Playing Rights: Alabang, Calatagan, Camp John Hay, Canlubang, Canyon Woods, Celebrity, Eagleridge, Eastridge, Forest Hills, Makati Sports, Malarayat, Orchard, Riviera, Sta. Elena, Southwoods, Tagaytay Highlands and Midlands, Valley Golf, Wack Wack (low price), Rockwell Condominium and Others
Need Lessors for Playing Rights: Eastridge B, Punta Fuego, Rockwell, Sherwood B
Selling: Villas, Belleview, Pinecrest and Woodlands in Tagaytay Highlands and Orchard Townhouse (Terms or Rent), Pacific Plaza (3 bedrooms), and Ponte de Salcedo (3 bedrooms)
Lots: Eagleridge, Forest Hills, Punta Fuego, Royale Tagaytay and Southwoods
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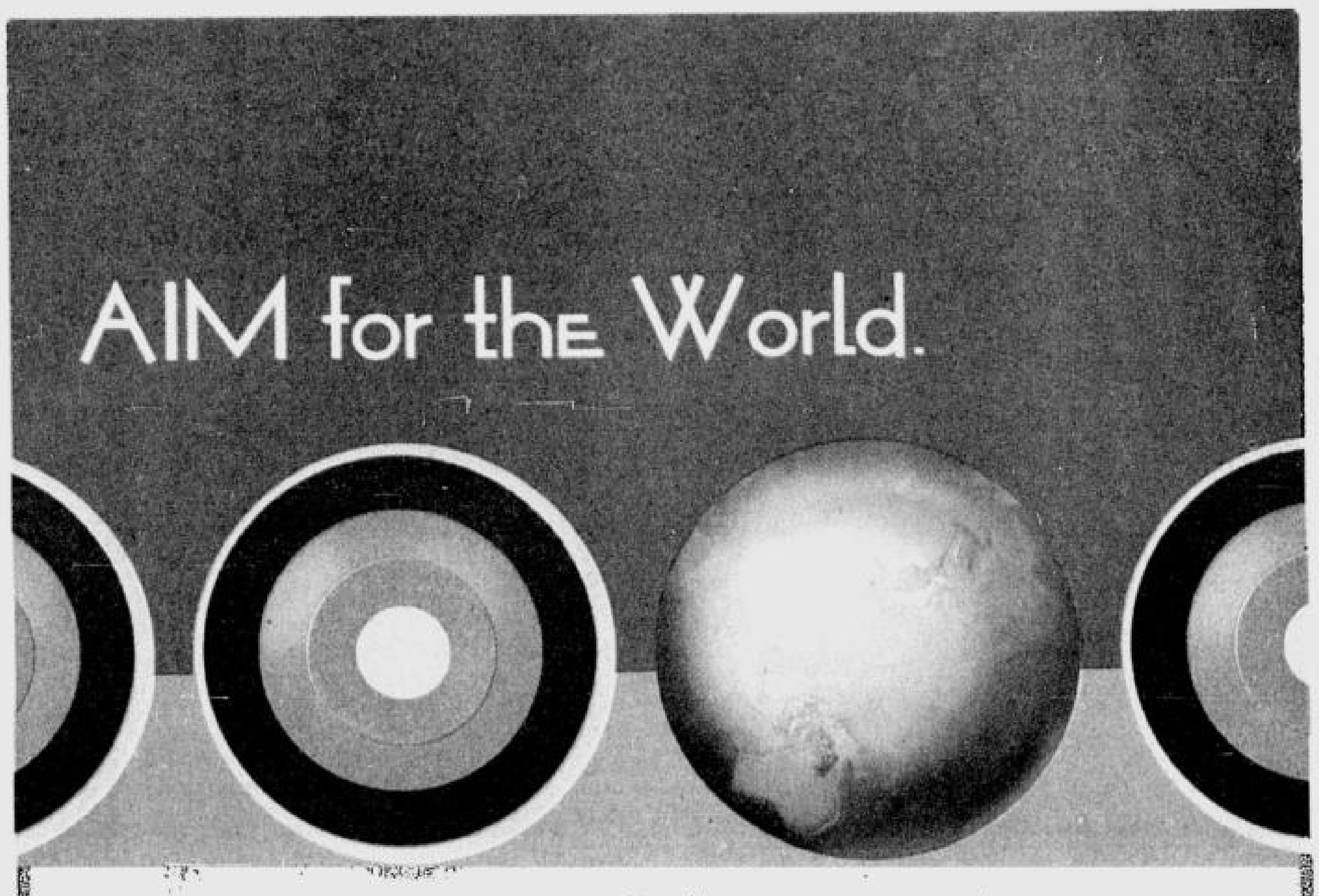

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People, Events & Products

ARIES ESPINOSA, Asst. Editor

WorldroomEvents, Compaq team up to make event planning easier

ON-LINE event planning service WorldroomEvents and Compaq (Asia) Ltd. have teamed up to make it easier and more rewarding for organizers to leverage the benefits of planning their events through the Internet.

Event planners who use the free online tools of WorldroomEvents (www.worldroomevents.com) to select event venues become eligible to win a Compaq Armada laptop computer or an iPaq Pocket PC.

"Compaq is the hardware supplier of choice for those holding events and we are delighted to partner with them to introduce more planners to our unique features," said WorldroomEvents president Tina Nepomuceno-Di Cicco. "Our free tools include unique venue search and RFP (request for proposal) tools that can save planners time and money."

WorldroomEvents is a partnership between I-Quest Corp., the leading provider of broadband Internet solutions for the travel industry, and Reed Travel & Meetings (Asia). The joint online B2B destination targets event planners, meeting organizers, suppliers and others in the fast-growing meetings, incentives, exhibition and convention (MICE) industry worldwide.

It is the only on-line service for event planners that concentrates on Asia and Europe. It includes a database of more than 1,500 venues and facilities and rich tools including a search engine with pre-set criteria, enabling interactive RFPs exactly tailored to the planner's requirement.

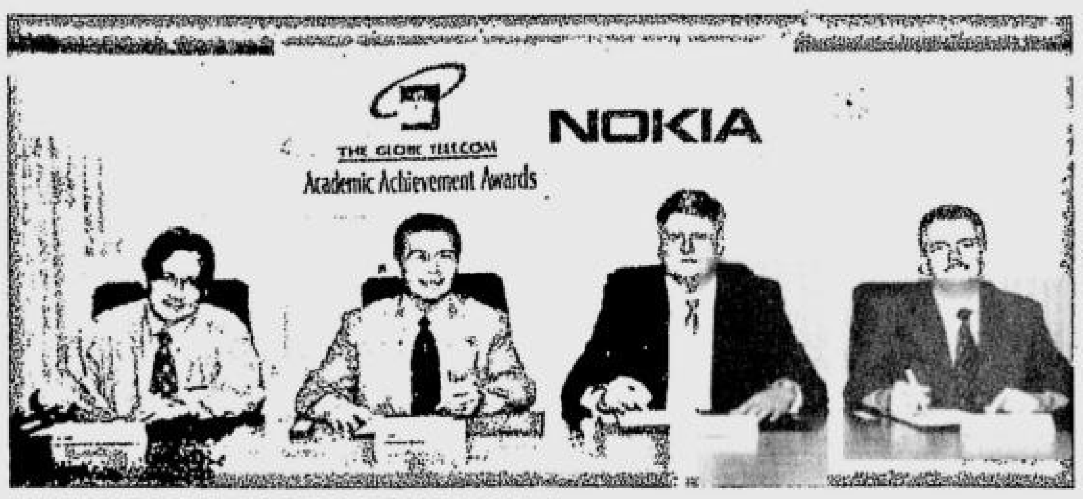
In addition to the chance to win a Compaq laptop or iPaq Pocket PC, professionals who buy any Compaq product through the WorldroomEvents web site automatically receive a special gift.

To qualify to win a Compaq laptop or iPac Pocket PC, a planner organizing an event for 10 or more participants must simply use the Venue Search and RFP tools found at the WorldroomEvents web site to book the event.

After the booking is finalized with any of the more than 1,500 venues on the WorldroomEvents site, the planner must send a copy of the RFP and proof of payment to the venue by email to inquiries@worldroomevents.com.

Each successful event booking earns one point, and the planner with the most points by December 31, 2001 wins the Compaq Armada laptop. The planner who books the most number of roomnights, meeting rooms, convention halls or a combination of each wins the iPaq Pocket PC.

The contest is one in a series of joint projects WorldroomEvents plans with Compaq.



NOKIA BACKS GLOBE FOR 6TH GTAA

Global mobile phone provider Nokia has signed up as one of the major sponsors in the 6th Globe Telecom Academic Achievement Awards. For the six straight years now, Nokia has supported GTAA – Globe's core social responsibility program promoting student excellence. Shown formalizing the sponsorship agreement are (from left) Globe Telecom AVP for public relations Jones Campos, Globe Telecom AVP for corporate and regulatory affairs Rodolfo Salalima, Nokia Philippines account director Tapani Sairanen and Nokia Philippines project Michael Ratcliffe. GTAA is the only annual industry-academe linkage program in the telecoms and IT industries. It has honored a total of 66 Electronics and Communications Engineering (ECE) and Electrical Engineering (EE) college graduates and 62 high school graduates who have excelled in Science and Math.

Active Fluoride

TEEN MILLIONAIRE

Seventeen-year old Niño Bajaros (second from right) is a regular junior high school student from Barangay Linis, Jala-Jala, Rizal. Just a couple of days before Christmas, his name was chosen from among the mountains of entries for the "Doble Milyonaryo" promo sponsored by QuickChow and Beam toothpaste. Niño was just supposed to win P500,000 but as the mechanics stated, the prize was to be doubled if your entry with QuickChow proofs of purchase had a carton of Beam toothpaste. Niño, shown here with his father and brother is being congratulated by Tet del Rosario, product manager of QuickChow, as he receives his check for P1 million.

P9M up for grabs in the Nescafé Classic raffle promo

THE Nescafé Classic Breakfast Papremyo raffle promo is giving away prizes totaling to P9 million.

Prepare breakfast in your new kitchen or enjoy it in your new bedroom because beginning March 13 nine weekly raffle draw prizes of bedroom showcases or kitchen showcases will be given away. For the grand raffle, nine trips for two to Paris, France will be given away and a brand new house and lot worth P2 million is at stake.

It's so easy to join. Simply write your name, address, signature, telephone number and promo title "Nescafé Classic Breakfast Papremyo" at the back of any empty Nescafé Classic refill packs, membrane foils and box tops. Drop your entries in Nescafé Classic Breakfast Pepremyo raffle boxes located at selected supermarkets and grocery stores nationwide.

Or you can join the weekly game show portion in "Eat Bulaga" and get a chance to win cash prizes. Simply drop your entries in drop boxes at the Tape Studios, Doña Juana Rodriguez Ave., corner Aurora Blvd., Quezon City. Only those who drop their entries at the Tape Studios will qualify as studio contestants.

Studio contestants will be pre-drawn every week. Their names, along with the schedule of the game, will be announced at "Eat Bulaga" a week prior to the next game episode. Non-winning entries will automatically qualify for the grand draw.

The nationwide grand raffle draw will be held at "Eat Bulaga" on May 19. Deadline for submission of entries for the grand draw is on May 12, 2001.

BURGER KING MORAYTA INAUGURATION

Burger King officials in the company of the wards at the Tahanan ng mga Batang Kapatiran whom they treated at their Morayta restaurant on its inauguration and blessing. With the street children are (standing, from left) marketing director Achie Chanyungco-Sy, HRD manager Rhoda Flores, operations director Robbie Yom, and PERF, Inc. president Raul Nazareno.

SEATTLE'S BEST COFFEE

SEATTLE'S BEST IN MANDALUYONG

Seattle's Best Coffee (SBC) recently opened its doors to coffee lovers in SM Megamall. Coffee Masters Inc. executives paid a courtesy visit to Mandaluyong Mayor Benhur Abalos (second from left). From left: Vic Gregorio, Coffee Master's Inc. marketing manager; Vicky Zach, Seattle's Best Coffee international marketing director; Edith Alejo, assistant café manager, and Jun Lopez, café manager SBC Megamall.

Visitor's Guide to the Philippines: A must-have travel magazine this summer

WONDERING where to spend the summer season? Check out the maiden issue of the Visitor's Guide To The Philippines, the newest quarterly travel publication that aims to promote Philippine tourism. And find the best Holy Week destination and the hottest summer spots in country.

And since this is the season for family getaways, the new Visitor's Guide To The Philippines has some perfectly sound and cool travel suggestions as it features top vacation spots in Luzon, Visayas and Mindanao, while giving pointers on where to stay and where to go during the fiesta season.

The publication will likewise feature a celebrity writer as he talks about his beloved hometown. Features will include whale watching in Baler, nightlife in the new Ermita, theme restaurants and cafes, bargain shopping, cruising tips, travel promos and a lot more.

The maiden issue of the Visitors Guide To The Philippines will be available in major bookstores, bookstands and hotel kiosks nationwide. For subscription and advertising inquiries, call the publishers, Integrated Marketing Services Phils. Inc. at 524-6601 to 06.

'BRING ME' CONTEST

Students from the University of Santo Tomas – College of Pharmacy, cheered and voted for girls who wore the sexiest outfit during the dwLL/Mellow Touch 94.7's On Campus Tour. The "Bring Me" contest was one of the games during the school tour. UST was the fifth campus to be visited – the first four included UP Diliman, Ateneo, DLSU-CSB and AMA College. The bands featured were Lastiki, Put3ska, Ordinary People and Barbie's Cradle. The girls are joined in this photo by dwLL Willy Smith (right) and newscaster Ruth (left).

ROTARY INTERNATIONAL DISTRICT 3800
VITAMIN SUPPLEMENTATION
WELCOME

GRANT FORUM

The Rotary Club of San Juan del Monte, District 3800, represented by president Annete Lee Esparaz (second from right), participated in the 3H Grant Forum, a very vital project implemented nationwide. Others in photo are the presidents from the different clubs.

CPSP INDUCTION OF OFFICERS

Corporate Planning Society of the Philippines (CPSP) 2001 Board of Directors (from left) secretary Richard Dennis Tan (Jade Internet), Ramon Santos (Planters Products, Inc.), treasurer Enriqueta Disuanco (GSIS), first VP Jun Bernardo (Pilipinas Shell), CPSP 2001 president Pamela Ann Da Silva (San Miguel Corp.) second VP Annie Mendoza (UA&P), Ramon Duremdes (Raymond Rogers, Inc.), Gina Macatangay (Globe Telecom), Fernando Martinez (Eastern Petroleum Corp.), Portia Sto. Domingo (Philamlife) and Alex Escucha (China Bank) are inducted into office by deputy executive secretary for legal affairs lawyer Jose T. Tale during the CPSP First General Membership meeting held recently.

BITS & Clips

Tutorial center opens branch in Greenhills

AHEAD Tutorial and Review Center just opened its newest branch in Greenhills, San Juan, Metro Manila.

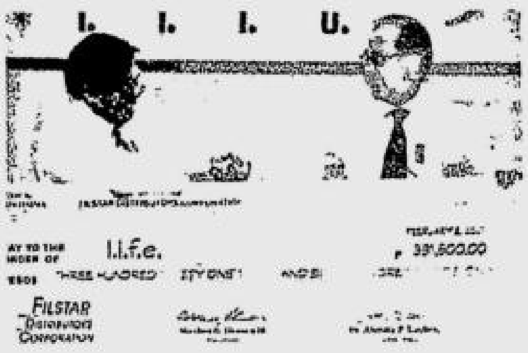
Located at the second floor of the Providence Building along Annapolis Street, the branch will service the tutorial and review needs of students of nearby schools. Ahead offers tutorial services to students of all ages, in all subjects and at all levels. It specializes in one-on-one tutorials and offers home-based tutorials aside from the much recommended center-based tutorials. There are tutorial sessions for academic subjects, languages and computer operations. Ahead's main office may be reached at 426-0034 to 36, its new Greenhills office at 722-7258.

Courses on English language, management, personality dev't

THE ENGLISH Language Proficiency Training Center will conduct training sessions on various courses at the Manila Diamond Hotel, Onyx Function Room, Roxas Boulevard, Manila starting March 19, 2001. Courses offered include Basic English Grammar, Oral Communications, Technical Writing, Feature Writing and Personality Development. Management courses include Accounting for Non-Accountants, Time Management, Financial Management, Credit Management and Performance Appraisal, among others. Interested parties may call 750-1715 or 843-4991 to 95 for complete course description.

Course on fundamentals of musicianship

THE MIRIAM College Center for Applied Music will offer a course on fundamentals of musicianship from April 16 to May 17. The offering is an integrated course for music teachers in the grade school level. Ruby Salvoza, who has a master's degree in Music Education from the University of the Philippines will teach the course. Miriam Center for Applied Music also offers courses in piano, voice, violin, flute, guitar, cello and music theory. For details, call 426-1822 or Miriam College at 927-2421 loc. 218.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FILSTAR DISTRIBUTORS CORPORATION

HALLMARK DONATES TO LIFE

Filstar Distributors Corporation, local licensee of Hallmark greeting cards, recently turned over a check donation worth almost P400,000 to the Leukemic Indigents Fund Endowment (LIFE) in culmination of the fifth year of the Hallmark for Life project. Shown are (from left) LIFE chair Dr. Alendry Caviles Jr. and Filstar president Maximo Licauco III.

DLSU-D librarian heads PAARL

THE PHILIPPINE Association of Acedemic Librarians (PARRL) recently elected a new set of officers during its annual general assembly held at the De La Salle University-Dasmariñas (DLSU) campus. Elected president is Maribeth Aguila, director of DLSU-D's Aklatang Emilio Aguinaldo.

Aguila said that her priority projects for the association include the holding of conferences that aim to determine the future of academic libraries as an agent of change; reaching out and extending membership to as many librarians as possible; and continuously develop the PAARL Net – a network of academic and research libraries. PAARL is one of the largest associations of certified librarians in the country. Its members come from learning centers of tertiary schools as well as research institutions.

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FLORINDA QUITO-SICAY

of Lubao, Pampanga

Has peacefully joined her Creator on February 25, 2001 at the age of 82.

We, her loving family—husband **TEOFILO**; daughter **MARITAS**; son-in-law **RICARDO MIRANDA**; and grandchildren **CACA, J.R.** and **LALA**—thank our Heavenly Father for the precious gift that she was in our lives.

Her remains lie in state at House of Many Mansions, MacArthur Highway, Angeles City; and will be transferred to San Nicolas 1st Chapel, Plaza, Lubao, Pampanga on February 27, 2001 at 3:00 PM.

Cremation will follow after the 8:00 a.m. Mass in Lubao, Pampanga on Wednesday, February 28, 2001.

"And when she shall die, take her and cut her out
in little stars, and she will make the face of heaven
so fine that all the world will be in love with night and
pay no worship to the garish sun."

Our Beloved

MONIQUE BLANCH VILLA

Went home to heaven on February 23, 2001 at the age of 29.

Her body lies at Alabang New Life Christian Center (ANLCC), Don Manolo Blvd., Alabang Hills.

Cremation will be on Wednesday, February 28 at 11:00 a.m. following a 9:00 a.m. service at ANLCC.

We love you and miss you, **Nikka**. Hug Jesus for us, okay?

Papa (Louis), Mama (Remedios), Nina and Mikki —

FR. ARTHUR F. SHEA, S.J.

was called home to the Lord on Sunday, 25 February 2001.

Wake: Chapel of the Immaculate Conception, Xavier University, Cagayan de Oro City Concelebrated Mass every evening at 8:00 PM.

Funeral Mass: at 9AM on Thursday, 1st of March in the Chapel of the Immaculate Conception.

Interment: Manresa Jesuit Cemetery, Cagayan de Oro City immediately after the Funeral Mass.

Please pray for the repose of his soul.

Our Dearly Beloved Mother

GERTRUDES F. MANALANGSANG

Born: March 29, 1949

Peacefully joined her Creator on February 23, 2001

Her beloved husband **Mauro**; children **Marvin, Margie** and **Mark Gil**, relatives and friends request the pious readers to pray for the eternal repose of her soul.

Her remains lie in state at their residence, 744 S. De Guzman Street, Malibay, Pasay City.

Interment will be on Thursday, March 1, 2001 after the 1:00 p.m. Mass at Manila Memorial Park, Sucat, Parañaque City.

In Loving Memory

on the **First Death Anniversary** of

ATTY. MA. CRISTINA MARTINA LOURDES de ACHAVAL y CARO

who passed away on February 27, 2000.

Holy Mass will be offered today at 7:00 p.m. at St. Alphonsus Mary de Liguori Church, Magallanes Village, Makati City. Her remains is entombed at the Crypt behind the Church.

We her parents **Fernando, Vilma** and brother **Fernando de Achaval** request friends and readers to join us in prayer for the eternal repose of her soul.

ERNESTO YATCO PERLAS

of Biñan, Laguna and Quezon City
District Governor (1973-1974)
Lions International District 301-D

*Peacefully joined his Creator and his wife the late **Venus Reyes Perlas** on February 25, 2001 at the age 87.*

His bereaved children—**Lourdes, Precioso, Ernesto Jr., Victoria** and **Erven**; sons-in-law—**Esteban, Eugene** and daughter-in-law—**Cecile**; 16 grandchildren; 15 great grandchildren request prayers for the eternal repose of his soul.

His remains lie in state at La Funeraria Paz, Araneta Avenue, Quezon City.

Interment will be on the Thursday, March 1, 2001 at the Holy Cross Memorial Park, Novaliches, Quezon City after the 8:00 a.m. Mass.

In Loving Memory
on the 7th Death Anniversary
of Our Dearly Beloved

Dr. Jovencio L. Valeña

of Calauag, Quezon

Masses will be offered at the following churches:

ST. PETER'S PARISH
Calauag, Quezon
SAN ISIDRO LABRADOR PARISH
Hondagua, Quezon
MOST HOLY ROSARY PARISH
Lopez, Quezon
ST. CLAIRE MONASTERY
Lopez, Quezon
SAN DIEGO DE ALCALA PARISH
Gumaca, Quezon
BENEDICTINE SISTERS OF THE EUCHARISTIC KING
Banahaw Street, Cubao, Quezon City
PARISH OF ST. PAUL THE APOSTLE
Timog Avenue, Quezon City
IMMACULATE CONCEPTION PARISH
Cubao, Quezon City
SOCIETY OF THE DIVINE WORD
Kamuning, Quezon City
ST. VINCENT DE PAUL PARISH
Ermita, Manila

"From darkness let the light shine!"
Gen. 1:3

In Loving Memory of

STEVEN DOUGLAS POWELL JOSEPH

on his First Death Anniversary

(Beloved son of **Mike** and **Grace Joseph**, beloved husband of **Shirley Ann** and beloved father of **Stephen** and **Sarene**)

Who died in the Grace of our Lord on February 27, 2000. Holy Masses will be offered today, Tuesday, February 27, 2001 at the following:

Pink Sisters Convent, Quezon City	6:00 a.m.
St. Joseph the Worker Parish, Makati City	6:00 a.m.
Assumption Convent, Makati City	6:30 a.m.
St. Alphonsus Mary de Ligouri, Makati City	7:00 a.m.
St. John Bosco Parish, Makati City	7:30 a.m.
Our Lady of EDSA Shrine, Mandaluyong City	12:15 noon
La Salle Greenhills, High School Chapel, Mandaluyong City	2:15 p.m.
Santisimo Rosario Parish, UST, Manila	5:15 p.m.
Mary the Queen Parish, Mandaluyong City	6:00 p.m.
St. Andrew Parish, Mandaluyong City	6:30 p.m.
Santuario de San Antonio, Makati City	6:30 p.m.

Our Dearly Beloved Mother

Leonila Sanchez Bonus

Peacefully joined her Creator on February 26, 2001 at the age of 75.

Her late husband **Bejamin Bonus** (†); her loving children and in-laws **Albert-Lolit; Grace-Aris; Joan-Reynaldo; Francis-Pilar; Alice-Alex; Jerry-Josie; Jullie-Rolly; Evelyn-Celso; Edith-Noel; Joey-Lolit; Edward-Josie** and **Kerwin**; her grandchildren, her great grandchildren, relatives and friends request the pious readers to pray for the eternal rest of her soul.

Her remains lie in state at San Isidro Labrador Parish Church, Pasong Tamo, Tandang Sora Avenue, Quezon City.

Interment will be on Thursday, March 1, 2001, at Himlayang Pilipino, Tandang Sora Avenue, Quezon City.

TRIUNFO GILLEGO HONASAN

of Bulan, Sorsogon and Malate, Manila

Died in the Grace of our Lord on February 25, 2001 at the age of 66.

His bereaved wife **LULU DE CASTRO**; children **BEBE** and **ABET, DICOY** and **SUNDAY, EGGY** and **CHERIE, RENE** and **MARICAR, AL** and **DAK, DAN** and **ANN**; grandchildren **Bon, Nico, Angel, Maika, Nikee, Aika, Mica, Kara, Miggy, Iñigo, Ponching** and **Dannah**; brothers and sisters **Mela** (†), **Lydia, Romeo** (†), **Leonora** and **Edmundo**; nephews, nieces, relatives and friends request the pious reader to pray for the eternal repose of his soul.

His remains lie in state at the St. Ignatius Chapel Mortuary, Camp Aguinaldo, Quezon City.

Cremation will follow at the Loyola Memorial Park Crematorium after the 7 a.m. Mass on Wednesday, February 28, 2001.

We thank God for giving us a father as him.

LUIS VYTINGCO HERBOSA

Died in the Grace of our Lord on February 24, 2001 at the age of 76.

His beloved wife **Emilia**; children **Pepe, Nati** and **Gil**; daughter-in-law **Mel**; grandchildren **Samira, Camille, Mimik** and **Iris**; great grandchildren **Nico, Janine, Kai-Kai** and **Justine**; relatives and friends request readers to pray for the eternal repose of his soul.

His remains lie in state at the SEÑERES MEMORIAL CHAPEL, Barangay ANOS, LOS BAÑOS, LAGUNA (along the National Hi-way), and shall afterwards be cremated.

An obituary with a picture can be a fitting tribute to your departed loved one.
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HOUSE & LOT

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PASIG

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**Comml LOT Sixto Ave Cor 962m² 141-259275

Greenwoods Exec Village Pasig Soul/Park 534-7949

Origas Center Infront Tektite 5090m² 928-3267

Pasig City Gud 4 Thouse 10400m² Gud Buy 658-2410

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LOT

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RIZAL

**Imelda Ave Cainta 464sqm 6558371 / 0919-4037225

NR. STA. LUCIA 4.5T SQ 242-1521

246m² 3.9T/m² VISTA VERDE Cainta 6467425

**Along Marcos Baras Rizal LA1.8Has Jun 6819268

Cainta 100meter frntg. Ort. Ave. P2500/m² 658-2410

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Saint Anthony Subd. Lot 300m² Gud Buy • 658-2410

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Westgate Salcedo 1B 1CG FF FA60m² P4.5M 5347949

MANILA

NrlaSalle 3sty3BR T899-2148

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Bnew Gilmore / N. Domingo P3.6M 90m² 2br DBO 721-5226

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Loyola Grand Mansion LA180 FA200 616M 657-8185

Nova P5T/mo.10yrs 9390299

Nr West Ave F230m² 4.2M 3BR 4TB 2CG New 4134411

Panay Thse QC Newly Ren. 3Sty 5BR P5M • 928-3267

Proj. 2 FA183m² 3BR P4.1M Bnew 8439211

Scout Area 3BR 3TB 2CG MR w/TB 5.5M • 928-2497

REAL ESTATE FOR SALE

CONDO/TWNHSE/APT

QUEZON CITY

**Scout Townhse 115m² LOT 280m² 3Sty 5M Nice 9283267

Teachers Vill QC 3BR 2TB 1CG P2.5M • 928-2497

Teresa Hts Bung 240m² 4br nr SM Fview 3.5M 9283267

RIZAL

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LEGAL NOTICE

Notice is given that estate of late Felix R. Raqueza has been extrajudicially settled by his heirs on Feb 22, 2001 under Doc 405 Page 81 Book III Series 2001 of Atty. Agustin G. Matavia of QC
PDI-Feb27 March6&13, 2001

NOTICE OF LOSS

Notice is hereby given of the loss of Dangerous Drugs License Card No. 17637N99 of Dr. Erlinda Florentino Tel. 7329695

PERSONAL

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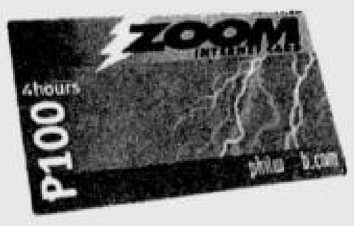

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GENCO-1

INVITATION TO PREQUALIFY AND TO BID

(PQ0101RCC-001)

The GENCO-1 Regional Contracts Committee (RCC) is inviting contractors to prequalify and to bid for the **SUPPLY OF LABOR, TOOLS/EQUIPMENT, PARTS/ CONSUMABLES AND SUPERVISION FOR TWO (2) YEARS MAINTENANCE SERVICES OF AIRCONDITIONING SYSTEM OF GENCO-1 BUILDINGS.**

Application for prequalification is open to all Filipino contracting firms with valid license or business permit to undertake the works/services described herein.

Prequalification Forms shall be available for issuance starting **February 19 to March 02, 2001** at the Contracts Management Office (CMO), 3rd Floor, NPC GENCO-1 Building, 161 Bonifacio Drive, Port Area, Manila. Applicants shall be issued Prequalification Form upon presentation of original copy of the applicant's DTI/SEC Certificate, together with the Letter of Intent and payment of a non-refundable fee of Two Hundred (P200.00) per copy.

For purposes of prequalification and bidding activities, the following schedule will be observed:

- Submission of Prequalification Documents - March 08, 2001 - 8AM to 5PM
- Issuance of Bid Documents - April 17, 2001 - 8AM to 5PM
- Pre-bid Conference - April 20, 2001 - 10AM
- Submission and Opening of Bids - April 30, 2001 - 10AM

The NPC reserves the right to reject any or all bids without offering any reason, waive any required formality therein and to make an award to the bidder whose proposal is the most advantageous to the Corporation. The NPC assumes no obligation to compensate or indemnify the bidder for any expenses or loss that may be incurred in the preparations of bids, nor does it guarantee that an award will be made.

Additional information will be furnished upon request. Address all communication/s to the undersigned at the aforementioned address.

(Sgd.) LORNA T. DY
Officer-In-Charge, RAFS
And Chairman, RCC

(PDI - Feb 17, 21 & 27 2001)

ANNOUNCEMENT

Please be informed of our new classified advertising rates effective February 1, 2001 issue.

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Republic of the Philippines
DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION AND COMMUNICATIONS
Philippine Coast Guard - Project Management Office
MARITIME SAFETY IMPROVEMENT PROJECT - III

INVITATION TO PRE-QUALIFY AND TO BID

CONSTRUCTION OF FOUNDATIONS; ERECTION OF TOWERS; INSTALLATION OF EQUIPMENT, INCLUDING LIGHTNING PROTECTION SYSTEMS; AND, COMMISSIONING OF TWENTY FIVE (25) LIGHTHOUSES IN VARIOUS SITES, COVERED BY MARITIME SAFETY IMPROVEMENT PROJECT, PHASE III (MSIP III)

The Department of Transportation and Communications - Philippine Coast Guard - Project Management Office (DOTC PCG-PMO) is inviting General Contractors for the aforementioned Project.

The scope of works cover civil; tower erection; electrical installation; and other miscellaneous works to complete the Project. Prospective bidders should have valid license and classification issued by the Philippine Contractors Accreditation Board (PCAB), with the following particulars :

Category and Classification	IAC Registration
Category: "A" Classification: General Engineering	Range: At least Medium "B" Kind of Project: Ports, Harbor & Offshore Engineering

The Instruction to Bidders; Bid Forms; General Conditions; Technical Specifications; Plans and Drawings shall be available for issuance to interested bidders from March 2-7, 2001 at 8:00 AM to 5:00 PM at the PCG-PMO Office, 2F S&L Bldg., 1500 Roxas Blvd. Cor. R. Salas St., Ermita, Manila with telephone no. 525-8843, upon presentation of original valid license and upon payment of a non-refundable fee of Five Thousand Pesos (PHP 5,000.00) at the Cashier's Office, DOTC Main, 5th Floor Columbia Tower, Ortigas Avenue, Mandaluyong City.

The deadline for submission of the duly accomplished documents shall be on 21 March 2001, 10:00 AM at PCG-PMO Office and a Pre-bid Conference is scheduled on 07 March 2001 at the same time and place.

The PCG-PMO reserves the right to reject any or all bids without offering any reasons, to waive any formality or technicality, and to award to any bidder whose proposal is deemed most advantageous to the government.

(Sgd.) **COMMO REUBEN S. LISTA**
Commandant, PCG and
Director, PCG-PMO

(PDI--Feb. 27, 28 & March 2, 2001)

INQUIRER

TRIVIA

By BONG BARRAMEDA

Paper clip

Q. How invented the paper clip?

A. The first person to patent a paper clip design was Johan Vaaler, a Norwegian inventor with a degree in electronics, science and mathematics, in 1899. He received a patent for his design from Germany, since Norway had no patent laws at that time; two years later, he was granted an American patent. Vaaler's invention was described as "consisting of forming same of a spring material, such as a piece of wire, that is bent to a rectangular, triangular, or otherwise shaped hoop, the end parts of which wire piece form members or tongues lying side by side in contrary directions."

For The Record. It was a company called the Gem Manufacturing Ltd. of England which first designed the double oval-shaped standard-looking paperclip. This familiar and famous paperclip was, and still is, referred to as the "Gem" clip—but it was never patented. William Middlebrook, of Waterbury, Connecticut, patented a machine for making paper clips of the Gem design in 1899.

Past Forward. This day in 1983: Michael Jackson won his first Grammy Award. He actually cornered a record eight Grammys that year, including Record the Year ("Beat It"), Album of the Year (*Thriller*) and Best Male Vocal Performer. Sting's "Every Breath You Take" beat everyone for the Song of the Year Award (which goes to the composer, rather than the performer). Culture Club, featuring the androgynous Boy George, won as Best New Artist.

WORD WATCH

Silahis : from the Spanish *celajes*, 'skylight; cloud effect.'

PDI - - February 27, 2001

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February 21, 2001

NOTICE OF SALE

Pursuant to the provisions of Section 2601 to 2610 of the Tariff and Customs Code of the Philippines, as amended, in correlation with CAO 5-90 dated **July 17, 1990**, as implemented by CMO 59-90 dated **September 3, 1990**, there will be a **PUBLIC AUCTION SALE** (Sealed Bidding) on **March 2, 9, 16, 23** and **30, 2001** from 1:30 PM until terminated at the 2nd Floor, Customs Hearing Room, MICP, North Harbor, Manila, the herein described articles:

> "MOTOR VEHICLES (ASSORTED BRAND), CONOMATIC SPINDLE SCREW MACHINE, USED AUTO AND TRUCK REPLACEMENT PARTS, SONY TAPE DISPLAY STAND, PEEBLES, TIRES, SANDALS, SLIPPERS, ELECTRIC FAN PARTS, REFRIGERATION PARTS, ELECTRICAL SUPPLIES, MONO RAILS (NAIC RESOURCES), CHOCOLATE MOULDING ASSEMBLY PLANT (SERG'S PHILS., INC.), RTW'S, ANIMAL FEEDS, USED TIRES W/RIM, ELECTRONICS, JOGGING PANTS, FROZEN PORK AND CHICKEN, VERMICELLI, USED PERSONAL EFFECTS AND HOUSEHOLD GOODS, USED APPLIANCES, BED MATTRESSES W/ BASE STAND AND COVER, DARTBOARDS, NYLON FILAMENT YARN, TEXTILE TRIMMINGS, IC PLASTIC TRAY, SULFURIC ACID, GATHERIZATION TRAY, HESCO DEX SUPER 400 AND PLASTIC SCREEN, SAYERLACK BINDER FOR WATERBORNE STAIN, UNFINISHED ELECTRONIC PARTS, SUGAR, DART BOARD, BED MATTRESS, IC PLASTIC TRAY, NYLON FILAMENT YARN, BATTERY OPERATED DOLLS, HESCO DEX SUPER 400, FERTILIZER, REFINED SUGAR, ANIMAL FEEDS, VERMICELLI AND MANY INTERESTING ITEMS."

For particulars, please see or contact **Mr. Isidro A. Pre**, Chief, Auction and Cargo Disposal Division, MICP, Tel. No. 245-41-01 local 2283.

(Sgd.) **BUENAVENTURA C. MANIEGO**
District Collector of Customs

(PDI -- Feb. 27, 2001)

Republic of the Philippines
Department of Agriculture
Bureau of Fisheries and Aquatic Resources
860 Quezon Ave., Quezon City, Metro Manila 3008
Tel. Nos. 372-50-57 • 372-50-43
Fax Nos. 372-50-48 • 372-50-42

INVITATION TO RE-BID

The Bureau of Fisheries & Aquatic Resources/Fisheries Resource Management Project (FRMP), Department of Agriculture, invites qualified bidders to participate in the bidding of "Leased Line Internet access from Internet Service Providers (ISP) & Leased Line Service from Telephone Companies" not later than 2:00 p.m. on **March 19, 2001.**

Bid form together with complete specifications may be obtained from Property Section.

Interested bidders are required to submit the following requirements upon security bidding forms: photo copies of Business License, Certificate of Registration/DTI, latest audited Financial Statement, latest Income Tax Return (original copies to be shown for authentication purpose).

A pre-bid conference will be held on **March 9, 2001** at the FRMP Conference Room, 2F Estuar Bldg., 880 Quezon Avenue, Quezon City. Submission and opening of bids will be on **March 19, 2001.**

This Office reserves the right to reject any or all bids without offering any reason, waive any required fomality and award the contract to any bidder whose proposal as evaluated by the PBAC is the most advantageous to the government. The PBAC assumes no obligation to compensate or indemnify the bidders for any expense or loss that may be incurred in the preparation of bids, or does it guarantee that an award will be made.

(Sgd) **MARCIANO F. CARREON III**
Project Director

(PDI--Feb. 27, 2001)

Defensor assures continuity in gov't housing policies

DEFENSOR

HOUSING and Urban Development Coordinating Council Chair Michael T. Defensor has assured private real estate developers that there will be no major reversal of earlier housing policies under the Macapagal administration.

The new housing czar said he would continue with majority of the programs initiated by his predecessor, Leonora de Jesus, which were based on the social reform agenda of earlier administrations.

Defensor made a similar pledge during the recent turnover of the HUDCC leadership from De Jesus to the youngest Cabinet member in the Macapagal administration.

He was one of the principal authors of the bill creating the department of housing, which will take over the functions of the HUDCC as the coordinating arm of all government housing agencies.

The presidential housing adviser also paid tribute to the initiatives undertaken by De Jesus during her term as HUDCC chair.

The Macapagal administration is also keen in keeping the socialized housing program for the poor as a pump-priming strategy for economic growth, Defensor revealed.

In her farewell speech at the HUDCC leadership turnover rites, De Jesus cited her contributions to the housing industry, especially the market-driven and competitive character of the socialized housing program.

De Jesus said that during her incumbency as housing chief, she was able to minimize red tape in the processing and issuance of housing permits for setting time and performance standards to ensure that housing units built meet the needs of the beneficiaries.

Defensor, for his part, vowed to provide security of land tenure to many of the currently homeless urban and rural families.

As of now, he said the housing program of the Macapagal administration will remain market-based, demand-driven and private sector-led.

Defensor also assured representatives of private real estate developers he would honor all agreements entered into by De Jesus during her term, especially in terms of housing policies and projects.

ONGOING CONSTRUCTION

The construction of the World 18 golf course at Summit Point Golf & Country Club is ongoing. The World 18 integrates the world's famous great holes into one magnificent golf course that is designed by Robert Trent Jones II. Sta. Lucia Realty & Development Inc. handles and facilitates this development located in Lipa, Batangas City. Robert Trent Jones II LLC director for Asian operations Mike Kahler, far left, does an ocular inspection with Summit Point Realty & Development Inc. president Robie Leviste, chair Conrado Leviste, project engineer Art Carlos and Sta. Lucia Realty's golf development consultant Eric Mananquil.

Search for well-maintained home at Maia Alta

AS PART of its commitment to a clean and healthy environment, Crown Asia has launched a search for the most ideally kept and well-maintained home in its premier subdivision in Antipolo City—Maia Alta.

"My ideal home, as we are calling this promo, aims to involve all Maia Alta homeowners, not only to make their homes look beautiful, but also to let them know that even one beautiful home can make the entire housing estate look as picturesque as it was conceived to be," said Marcelino C. Mendoza, Crown Asia chief executive officer.

Mendoza said "even one home can make all the difference between a beautiful subdivision and one that is mediocre."

Three winners for the "My Ideal Home" contest were declared. Mendoza identified these as homeowners Evelyn San Gabriel, Eduardo de la Cruz and Leonor Rivera. They were chosen based on how they were able to maintain their landscaping, the façade of their unit and the cleanliness not only of their unit but also of the surroundings.

The contest ran for two months and on the first month 10 finalists were declared. On the second month, the 10 finalists competed for the top prizes that included plaques of recognition and cash prizes.

Mendoza said the contest also aimed to emphasize environmental awareness where clean surroundings mean a cleaner bill of health for all residents and to foster camaraderie among residents.

Maia Alta is a master-planned community where residents feel secure in all aspects—from the design and construction of the houses, to the roads, to its amenities such as a clubhouse, swimming pool and sports center.

BUILDING DONATION

A simple ceremony was held during the inauguration of a two-room school building donated to the Mapalad Elementary School in Arayat, Pampanga, by the Evaristo R. Vazquez Sr. Foundation. Present during the ceremony are Vazquez Group of Companies chair Evaristo R. Vazquez Sr. (center), Vazquez Building System inventor Gary Vazquez (far left), Education Undersecretary Lourdes de Vera (holding corsage), Vazquez Group of Companies treasurer Pilar G. Vazquez (2nd from right) and special guest Mikey Macapagal-Arroyo (far right). Evaristo Vazquez Sr. wants to set an example and encourage other companies to build schools for the less fortunate..

Luxury condo offers unique lifestyle

OUTDOOR swimming pool is embraced by the butterfly chaped towers of Essensa.

EXCELLENT design, quality interiors and top-of-the-line amenities and services best describe Essensa East Forbes, a recently completed ultra-luxury residential condominium in Fort Bonifacio City.

Ricardo Cuerva, chief executive officer of Meridien Development Group, owner and developer of Essensa is a strong believer in the power and privilege of amenities and services to create a lifestyle for its buyers and endow a building with an identity that distinguishes it from other comparable residences. "The Essensa lifestyle enables us to target our market and the buyers to justify their purchase and decision to reside in Essensa," he says.

Signature brands

Differences in unique features and services are evident—from Essensa's designer label architect, quality workmanship and rich interiors to its branded furnishings and 5-star-hotel-like services. "The prestigious architectural firm Pei Cobb Freed & Partners is Essensa's ultimate amenity," says Cuerva with pride. "From then on, our pursuit of luxury was unrelenting."

In each of the three-bedroom suites at Essensa, immaculate construction and posh detail give full complement to the world's finest fixtures and trims to create the perfect frame of comfort and luxury. Quality Belgian maple wood floors rise to nine-foot-high ceilings, while expansive windows provide dramatic views of the lush greenery of Manila Golf Club, the gracious homes of Forbes Park and the dynamic city skylines of Makati and Ortigas.

The Gourmet kitchen alone comes complete with solid birchwood cabinetry, top-of-the-line Miele ovens, cooktops, dishwashers, range hoods and microwave ovens; granite countertops; and Sub-Zero refrigerators and freezers. Extensive use of Travertine stone and African wood panels can also be seen throughout the building.

Ultra luxurious bathrooms, especially designed by Villeroy and Boch, features only the most elegant fixtures from around the world including a full-size whirlpool in the master bedroom.

Impressive lobby

The open space of both towers rises to a double ceiling lobby with a spacious reception area in rare African wood panels. Huge glass windows with wooden shutters open to a sprawling landscaped garden.

The liberal use of windows also allows the generous flow of natural light. At the center of the sitting area is an atrium. It features a reflecting pond with a sculpture as centerpiece. The niche alcove walls with decorative basins give artistic touch.

A fascinating glass mosaic encasing leads to the guest elevators. The elevator lobby, which is more spacious than those in 5-star hotels, is decorated in jade-like tiles, accentuated with stained wall lamps and ornamental chandelier.

"These are the kind of finishes and furnishings one should recognize in purchasing or leasing a condominium," says Century Properties chair Jose E.B. Antonio. Costly materials like these not to mention hotel-style services and facilities augment not only the value of the residence but also create a lifestyle that meet and compliment the needs of the residents," Antonio further adds.

5-star service

For example, he continues, "We have a 24-hour concierge, which functions like a hotel concierge, only more personalized. She can book and confirm airline tickets for residents, make restaurant reservations, arrange housekeeping, as well as provide entertainment and leisure information." Apart from concierge service, Essensa also provides for elevator attendants, doormen and maid service.

There is also a resident general manager of international caliber who oversees the property, its operations and residents. Attentive and discreet security staffers also provide residents the privacy and safety they require. "Such is now becoming not only a trend but a necessity in the very high-end market," declares Antonio.

The Essensa Club

Just an elevator ride away is the Essensa Club that offers an exclusive array of leisure facilities. A first-rate health club features the best spa and fitness facility in the country. It features an outstanding hi-tech gym, a lavish jacuzzi, separate men and women lockers, saunas, massage and steam rooms. All of which can be enjoyed in the privacy and convenience of your own home. Essensa also boasts of a fabulous outdoor swimming pool and an indoor heated pool where you can get away from it all in breathtaking luxury. "These condominium features and services can only be seen in upscale neighborhoods, particularly in New York," concludes Cuerva.

Manila rarely has a residential condominium this good. And with a tightened economy, it may take quite a long time before another luxury development of this scale can be constructed.

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Astoria Plaza caters to corporate market

ORTIGAS City a burgeoning commercial and business district, is fast becoming a corporate hub next to Makati City. Its cluster of properties caters to the corporate market, a chunky revenue-maker worldwide.

One such property is the plush 35-story Astoria Plazas, a world-class package of serviced residences on Amber Avenue that soft-opened this month. It is 40-percent residential and 60-percent hotel with the combined services, amenities and privacy of both.

Homey setup

Mary Ann Reyes, the experienced general manager of Astoria Plaza, takes pride in its homey setup without necessarily giving up the perks of hotel support facilities like laundry and valet shop, business and fitness centers, swimming pool, sundry shop and concierge, and currency exchange.

Complementing the four-star, all-suites Astoria's services are the child-minding services and a special transportation arrangement for its guests within the area. "We're the only one offering a free shuttle service to drop off (and pick up in the afternoon) registered guests within Ortigas Center," said Reyes.

Long-staying businessmen and top brass executives of multinational companies comprise the bulk of the property's captive market. Jaded hotel habitues find it particularly appealing to stay in such a serviced residence that is less expensive but more secured than renting or owning a pad.

Odette Aguilar, Astoria's director of sales, said the property, gets most bookings for conventions, corporate meetings and frequent travelers who are familiar with the kind of setup that they offer—the privacy of your own apartment with the convenience of a hotel.

Exceptional

What's exceptional about the Astoria Plaza is that it's being managed by Genesis Hotels and Resorts Corp., a national chain of hotels and resorts firms in the country. It furnishes the required logistics and systems of a property engaged in the hospitality industry.

Unlike famous international hotel chains that lend their names to properties solely for management purposes, the highly reputable and all-Filipino GHRC has two impressive names in the hospitality industry as organizers—Miguel G. Cerqueda and Michael L. Cuisia.

Cerqueda and Cuisia have combined their excellent credentials to establish GHRC. By lending their expertise to GHRC-managed properties, the formidable duo came up with a dictum: "Bringing new excitement to honored traditions."

Both GHRC think tanks are giving the traditional hotel trade a fresh approach to make the business highly viable by placing qualified and well-trained staff backed up by dependable systems.

Aside from its ideal location, well-thought of services and facilities, Astoria Plaza is a stand-out in its very minimalist and ultra-functional interior design. The interiors capitalize on the basic shades of beige and black to create an impression of a maximized space. The modest-yet-tasteful furnishings defy clutter and exact orderliness—things that are very appealing to businessmen.

Come-ons

One of the best come-ons of the property is the uniform rate for its all-suites hotel units. A one- bedroom suite's preopening rate, single or double occupancy, is P3,000++ while the two-bedroom suite, can be availed of at P5000++. Inclusives are breakfast for two or for four for double or quadruple occupancy, bottles of mineral water, complimentary newspaper and late check-out upon availability.

As a better alternative to traditional hotels, Astoria Plaza has three outlets that guests can choose from: the Astoria Garden Café, Manhattan Bar Lounge and a themed restaurant plus Santi's Delicatessen, a concessionaire on the ground floor.

For various social and business functions, the property has two boardrooms and 11 function rooms with the biggest room accommodating up to 250 persons, banquet- style. Its audio-visual equipment is also available as requested.

Cathay Land Inc. led by its president Jeffrey T. Ng, is the developer of Astoria Plaza with US-based Gensler as the design consultant. Renowned interior designer and Los Angeles-based Ivy Almario collaborated with the PDAA Asia and Massive Design Group for the overall interior and architectural details.

For security, Astoria Plaza has a video entry phone/device in each unit near the door that allows the occupants to see incoming visitors for proper screening. Its unique German-made Hafele computerized key system that works like a remote control when pointed to its electronically locked doors has a memory for storing the last 100 entries. Once surrendered by the guest after his/her stay, the key can be reprogrammed for the safety of the next user.

The property has six levels of parking space that can accommodate over 300 cars for hotel guests.

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Preconstruction treatment: Best way to fight termites

WHILE homeowners can claim against insurance for fire, earthquake or theft, it is a totally different story for homes or buildings destroyed by termites. These little pests eat not only into houses but also into the hard-earned investment that is usually spent while building a home.

There are 2,000 species of termites and 70 of these invade the home. Of the 70, 20 are the most damaging types and they are called subterranean termites.

Tell-tale signs

Loose trims, sagging floors and cracked walls are tell-tale signs that termites are starting to take over the home. They build their nests in the soil or in the sides of trees or poles and they rely mainly on the soil for their source of moisture.

One termite colony is made up of about 60,000 to 1.5-million individual termites. Termites build their nests in the ground, make underground tunnels or aboveground shelter tubes of mud, feces and debris, enabling to enter a house or a building without direct wood contact with the soil. They can also enter the house through cracks, expansion joints, foam insulation below ground, hollow bricks, concrete blocks or through spaces around plumbing.

Denying entry

The first line of defense then is to deny them entry to the property.

"Denying termites entry to begin with is thus the most efficient and effective means of protection. And the best opportunity to deny entry is when a home or any structure is being built. Applying termiticide while a building or a house is under construction is called pretreatment or pretreat," explains pest control expert Jonathan C. David of Pest-Away Exterminating.

Treating the house before construction even begins, according to David, is cheaper than postconstruction termite treatment.

"The termite treatment performed during a structure's preconstruction phase is a crucial element of the construction process. Without termite treatment, the integrity of the structure may be compromised even within one year after construction is completed," David explains.

Barriers

David says that pretreatment allows trained professionals like Pest Away's to use horizontal and vertical barriers to all spaces that are prone to termite invasion.

A horizontal barrier is termiticide solution applied on the soil surface areas where footings and slabs will be poured, specifically for porches, patios or garage. This barrier stops termites before they can find cracks in slabs, expansion joints or other areas that would allow entry.

A vertical barrier, on the other hand, is positioned deeper into the soil around footings, foundation walls, and critical areas such as slab penetrations to prevent termites from moving into foundation walls and entering opening in the wall that might enable them to move unseen through voids to reach wood.

Payumo: Foreign investors in Subic did not back out

BY JERRY ESPLANADA

PAYUMO

FOREIGN investors who knocked on our door before the political turmoil and committed to do business here did not back out. They could have backed out because of the crisis but they did not."

"In fact, they have broken ground," announced Felicito Payumo, chair of the Subic Bay Metropolitan Authority.

Locators

Payumo, a former Bataan legislator, was referring to Japanese firms like Sankyo Seiki Manufacturing Co. Ltd., Sanyo Denki (Phils.) Inc. and Juken Sangyo (Phils.) Corp.

Sankyo Seiki is one of the biggest publicly listed companies in Japan. It is engaged in the production of micromotors for hard disk drives and pickups for digital video disks.

With investments of at least $100 million, the firm is occupying more than five hectares of the Subic Techno Park. The area is the second biggest manufacturing facility at the Freeport.

Sankyo Seiki, which begins operations later this year, plans to put up a software engineering center to support its Subic production plant.

Another new locator is Sanyo Denki, which occupies over 4.3 hectares of the Subic Techno Park.

With committed investments of $21 million, the company is a "world leader in the manufacture of small precision motors, servo-motors and systems, UPS and engine generators with a global distribution network."

Sanyo Denki's manufacturing plant at the Freeport is its first production facility outside Japan.

Ongoing construction in a 4.5-hectare spread at the Techno Park is Juken Sangyo's manufacturing facility. The company manufactures plywood, laminated veneer lumber and laminated lumber for households and offices.

At the peak of its operations, the Japanese firm is expected to export up to 750 containers of finished products a month.

"The Subic port will definitely get busy," said a bullish Payumo.

More investments

Other locators include Aparri Electronics Corp. with $6 million in additional investments in electronic products; Yi-Phone Subic Bay Corp. which committed an additional $3.13 million in machinery investments; Catcher Technology Phils. Inc., the main supplier of notebook parts for Acer Philippines; and Comoss Electronics (Phils.) Corp. that has just completed a new manufacturing plant at Phase 1 of the Subic Bay Industrial Park.

According to Payumo, "the list of locators is getting longer. While others speculate that investors are putting on hold their business plans in the country, what is actually happening here is contrary to that bleak picture."

"It's business as usual at the Freeport and business is definitely doing well here," he said in an interview.

Payumo called the new investments a "vote of confidence of the private sector on the government as well as on the Freeport."

Earlier, Federal Express, which is based at the Subic International Airport, extended its lease contract (which is set to expire next year) to 2007 with an option to extend it further to 2013.

Also expanding their operations are BICC Brand Rex with $20 million in additional inputs, Koryo Subic, Inc. ($3 million) and Active Alliance, Inc. ($2 million).

In December, the Freeport's cumulative investments amounted to $3.08 billion.

Exports

Last year's exports, on the other hand, totaled $1.18 billion, an increase of 9 percent over 1999 figures of $1.08 billion and 113 percent than 1998's total of $545 million.

The Department of Trade and Industry lists Subic as the third largest export revenue earner in the country. First and second on the list are Metro Manila and Baguio.

Since September 1998, the Freeport registered $2.49 billion in total exports, which represents 64 percent of SBMA's cumulative export receipts of $3.88 billion.

In its yearend report, the SBMA said the combined collections of customs duties and taxes for 2000 totaled P2.1 billion, exceeding revenue collections in 1998 (P993 million) and 1999 (P1.85 billion).

Last year, the SBMA reported a net income of P105.1 million, an improvement over 1999 losses of P105.6 million.

"Another good news is the hiring this year of 6,000 additional workers by Freeport locators," Payumo said.

Last year, the SBMA Labor Center facilitated the employment of nearly 14,000 new workers, "bringing to 34,372 the total number of workers employed by locators and SBMA. This far exceeds the employment level of 30,000 during the time of the Americans," he said.

Port development

When interviewed, Payumo also disclosed that a 16.45-billion yen loan package from the Japanese government (through the Japan Bank of International Cooperation) would bankroll the Subic port development project.

The $215-million plan calls for the development of a new container terminal at the Cubi Point area, "one capable of accommodating Panamax and post-Panamax vessels and the rehabilitation of existing port facilities at the Naval Supply Depot and Boton areas."

It will also increase container port capacity to 900,000 TEUs a year (compared to Hong Kong and Singapore that handle 14-million TEUs each).

Port development, Payumo said, will complement the 92-kilometer Subic-Clark-Tarlac road project.

"One project will not succeed without the other. Both projects are expected to jumpstart the development of Central Luzon, obviously left behind by the Calabarzon development," he noted.

At this point, "it makes sense to open Subic's horizon toward Central Luzon. Subic should not be an enclave," Payumo said.

He stressed that as the flagship of economic zones in the country, "the Freeport's vision must soar, its geography must not be confined."

Traditional roofing materials no longer practical nowadays

GLOBAL warming and other negative atmospheric conditions have greatly changed what used to be predictable weather here and abroad. Places all over the world have been experiencing terrible weather conditions and people are redoing their homes to ensure that they are protected from extreme weather conditions.

Priority attention is being given to roofs as they are the most vulnerable part of shelters. The considerations for finding the right roof are aplenty—it must be able to withstand strong winds, a lot of rainfall and a lot of heat not withstanding the fact that it must be esthetically good and attractive.

Traditional roofing materials such as metal roofs are no longer practical nowadays as they usually are not suitable under extreme weather conditions. The traditional use of metal roofs is now being replaced by the more practical CPAC Monier roof tiles as metal roofs are not as durable and as heat and sound resistant as CPAC Monier tiles are. The thermal insulating qualities of CPAC Monier tiles are superior to metal roofing due to thermal lag.

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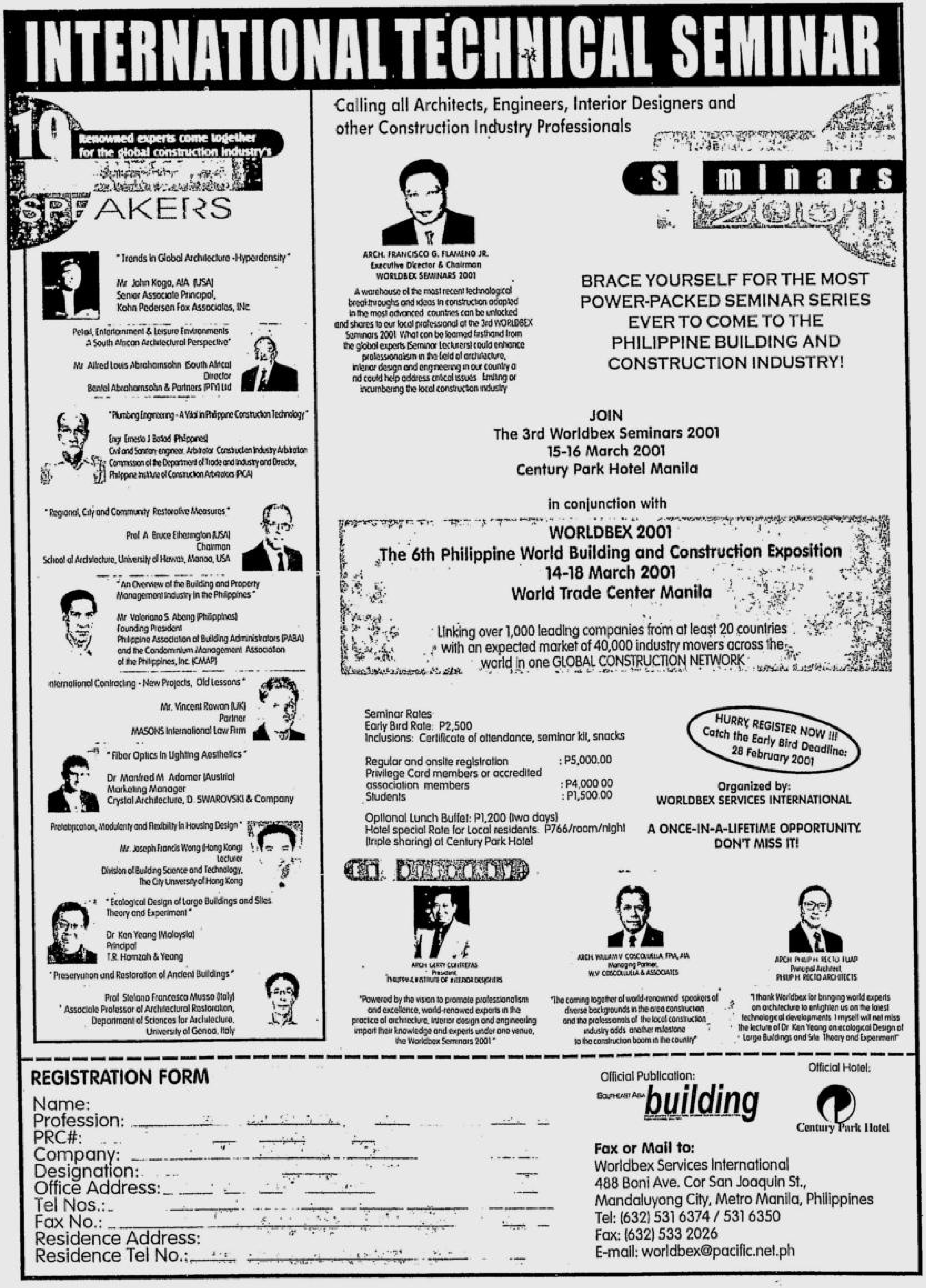

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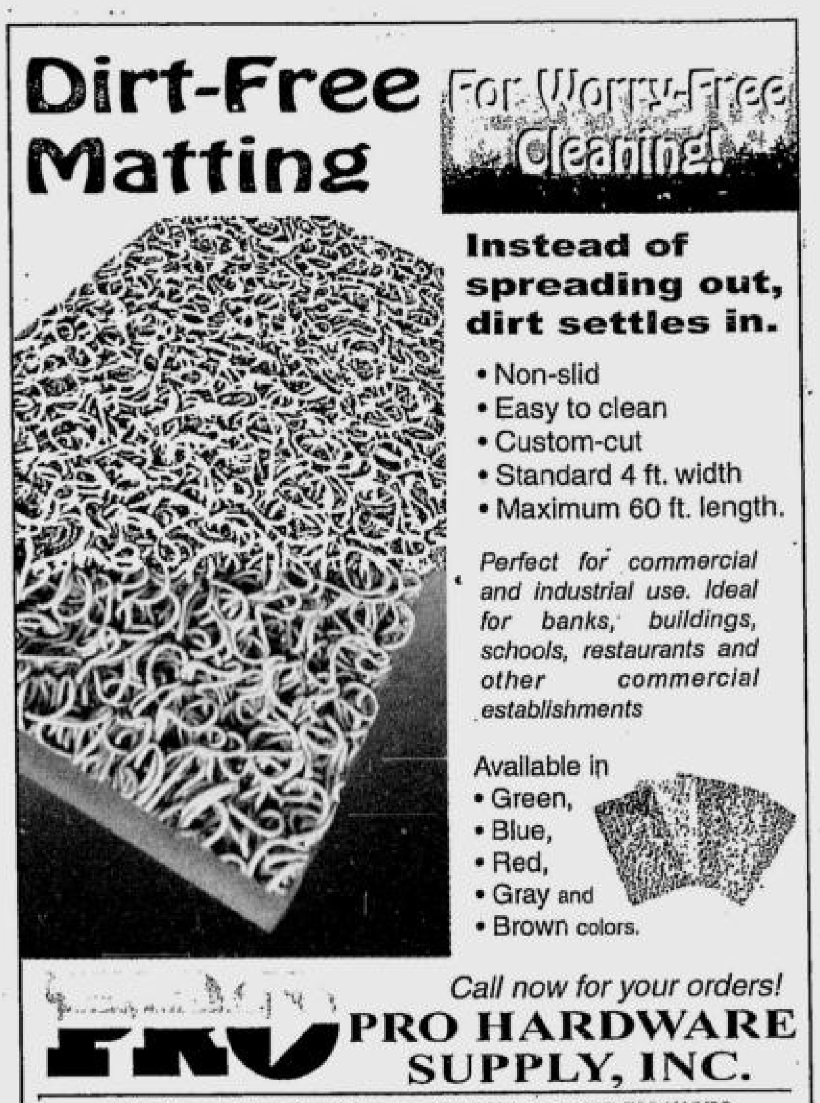

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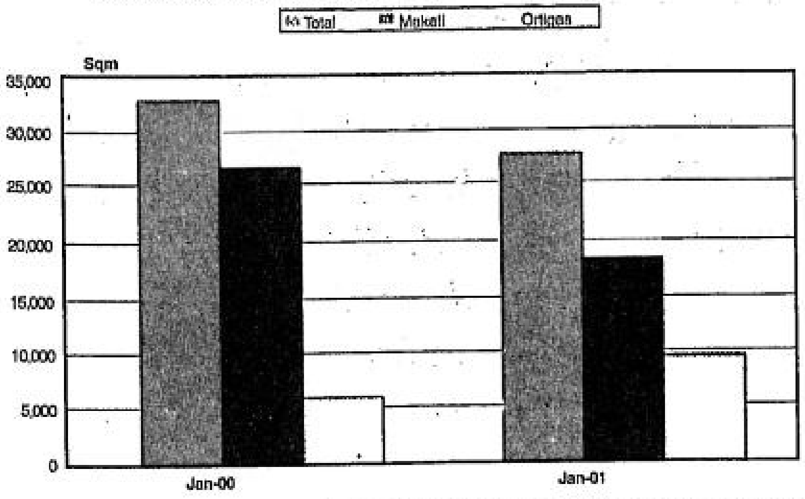
REAL ESTATE

CESAR D. MANGAWANG, Editor

Reality bites for 'oversupplied' office space after Edsa II euphoria

BY TESSA R. SALAZAR

Comparative Office Space Demand January2000 and 2001



THOUGH horizontal or residential development in the Philippine real estate sector posed a promising future after People Power Part II in January, the future hasn't come yet for office spaces, particularly in the country's Makati and Ortigas Business Districts.

FPDSavills Research, in its property market commentary, noted that the supply side concerns for the office space sector would continue to drive the market downward this year.

FPDSavills Phils. associate director for research Benedict Miranda said the forecast demand would not match the supply growth when more than 336,000 square meters of "Grade A" space invades the market. He noted that even discounting space allocated for end-use, supply will continue to be a concern as vacancies in existing Grade A stock remain at a high 20 to 25 percent.

It was also revealed that overall office vacancies in the Makati and Ortigas CBDs will dip slightly to 32 percent in 2001 from a high of 35 percent in 2000. The research group attributed this to older office developments that were "in no position to compete with new Grade A buildings."

Grade A buildings, the research group predicted, will form a third of the total market.

Miranda disclosed that apart from the supply side concerns is the rental rates issue as prime grade buildings offer competitive rates that are below market levels. This factor, he added, would make the situation even more difficult for older buildings.

"We're talking about rates below P500 per square meter. Average rates of prime space in Makati range from P550 to P600 per square meter. RCBC (Plaza), which is a new building, is offering off-rates or rates below market level," he said.

Meanwhile, he disclosed rental rates for the Ortigas area are between P300 and P350 per square meter.

Miranda said the strategy for new buildings is to attract as many tenants as possible, then "lock" the tenants to be able to at least compensate for the maintaining cost.

Office space demand improvement

Meanwhile, office space take-up, or demand, for the month of January slightly improved compared to December 2000 take-up by 156 percent. However, January 2001 fell short by 15 percent compared to January 2000 take-up.

Overall, office space take-up in January 2001 totaled 27,741.21 square meters compared to 10,835.02 square meters last December. Makati CBD accounts for 65 percent of this figure.

Improvement in Grade A office space take-up was attributed by FPDSavills to new movers such as Bank of East Asia, HKT Network Services, Benchmark Holdings Company Inc., KMM Intex Co. Ltd., Anglo Oriental Consulting, LKG Tower and RCBC Plaza.

Among the movers in the Ortigas CBD are Daystar Realty Ltd., Exxonmobil Petroleum, Tiutez Telecommunication Inc., Hong Kong Shanghai Banking Corp., and United Coconut Planters Bank.

Major movers cited by FPDSavills include the financial intermediators, real estate and renting firms, transport companies, storage and communication firms, and manufacturers.

Also noted were improved demands for Grade B/C developments by 119 percent, compared to last month's office take-up. But the January 2001 improvement likewise fell short by 11 percent compared to January 2000 figures.

Worldbex seminars feature famous construction experts

THE 3RD Worldbex Seminars 2001, slated for March 15 and 16 at the Century Park Hotel, features 10 world experts in construction, architecture and allied industries, who will share their experiences and successes in different parts of the globe. The seminar theme is "Spelling the Difference in Global Construction."

The seminar, organized by Worldbex Services International, features 10 world renowned experts in building and construction who will share their knowledge on the latest trends in these fields.

Power-packed seminar

WSI founding president Joseph Ang, said the seminar is considered the most power-packed series of the year that is open to architects, engineers, interior designers and other construction industry professionals and students in these fields.

Speakers on the first day and their respective topics are John Koga, senior associate principal, Kohn Pedersen Fox Associates Inc of the United States, "Trends in Global Architecture Hyperdensity"; Alfred Abrahamsohn, senior director and chief executive, Bentel Abramson & partners of South Africa, "Retail, Entertainment and Leisure Environments: A South African Architectural Perspective";

Engineer Ernesto J. Battad Sr., a Filipino civil and sanitary engineer, "Plumbing Engineering—A Vital Experience in the Philippine Construction Technology"; Prof. Bruce Etherington, chair, University of Hawaii School of Architecture, "Regional City and Community Restorative Measures"; and Val Abeng, founding president, Philippine Association of Building Administrators, Condominium Management Association of the Philippines, "An Overview of the Building and Property Management Industry in the Philippines."

For the second day, the speakers and their topics are Vincent Rowan, partner, Masons International Law firm in the United Kingdom, "International Contracting—New Projects, Old Lessons"; Manfred Adamer, marketing manager, Crystal Architecture of D. Swarovski & Co. of Austria, "Fiber Optics in Lighting Esthetics";

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Avail of half rates for the two-day Worldbex 2001 seminars by registering earlier than Feb. 28. The registration fee, if paid after Feb. 28, is P2,500 or half of the regular seminar rate of P5,000 for the actual date, and for students the rate is P1,500.

Likewise, the fee for Worldbex privilege card members and accredited construction professional association members is P4,000.

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After listening to these lectures, seminar participants will also have the chance to view the exhibits of the 6th Philippine World Building and Construction Exposition (Worldbex 2001) at the World Trade Center. Worldbex 2001 is considered the biggest-ever construction trade show, featuring the latest technologies around the globe.

Already more than 400 exhibitors from the United States, Europe, Asia, Canada, South America, Africa and Australia have shown keen interest to participate, Ang said.

According to Ang, Worldbex 2001 promises to be the ultimate venue for showcasing goods and services while also providing industry associations with the best opportunity to interact with one another and forge partnerships in wider international networks.

Support

The twin events are organized by the WSI in cooperation with the Philippine Institute of Interior Designers and the Filipino Professional Architects, the European Chamber of Commerce of the Philippines and the US Commercial Service.

Worldbex 2001 enjoys the support of 22 local industrial associations. It is sponsored by Wilsonart International, Boysen Paints, Eurotiles, American Standard, Mariwasa, Dutch Boy, Nextel, The Brain Computer Corp., Automation and Security Inc., Puriflex Mineral Water Systems, Multi-Rich Home Decors, Kopino Corp., HCG, Emerald Vinyl, Davies Paints, Ariston, DHL Worldwide Express, Wizzard Technologies, Café Puro, and National Bookstore. Donors include Glassworks and Peon Interiors.

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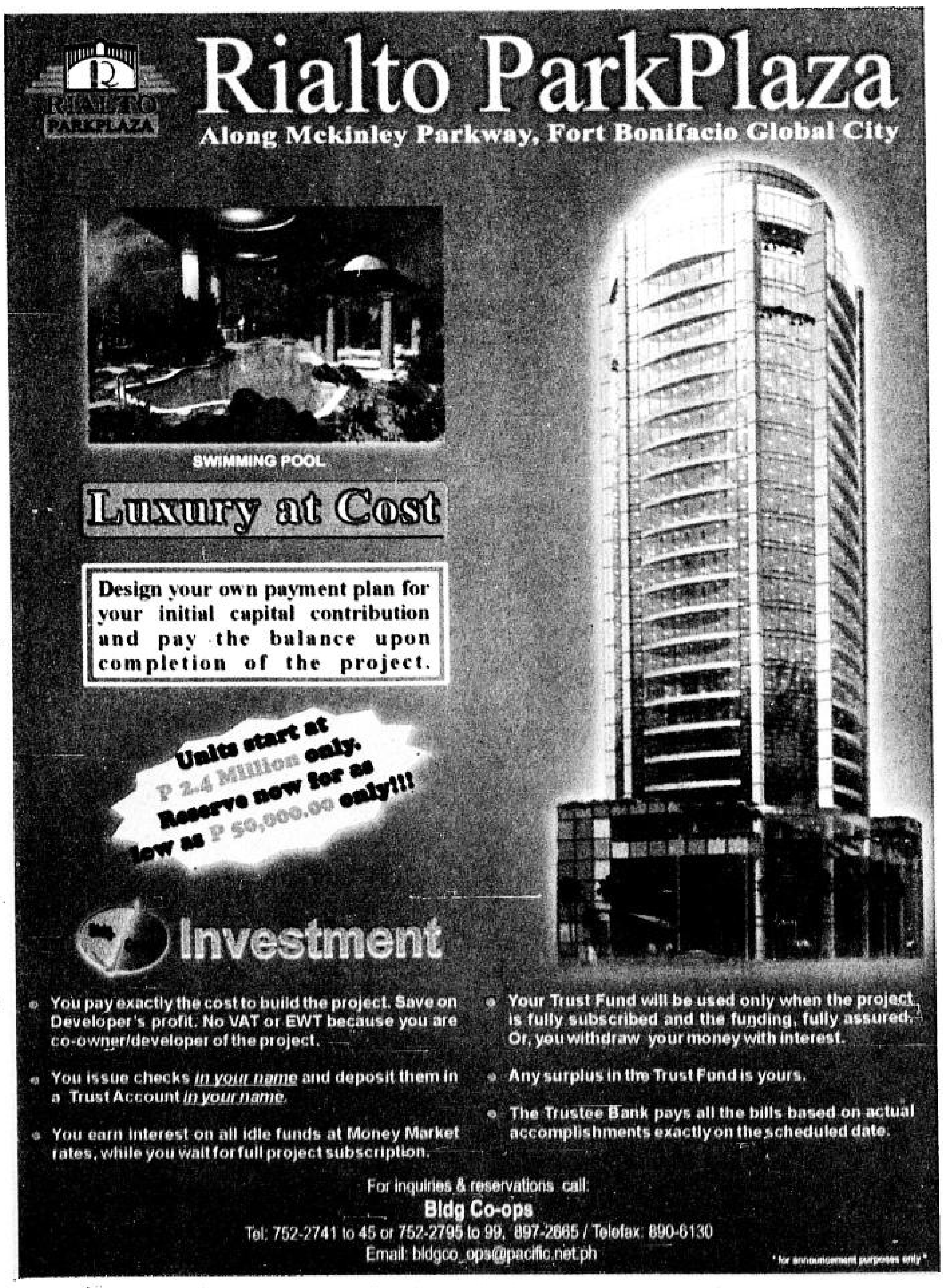
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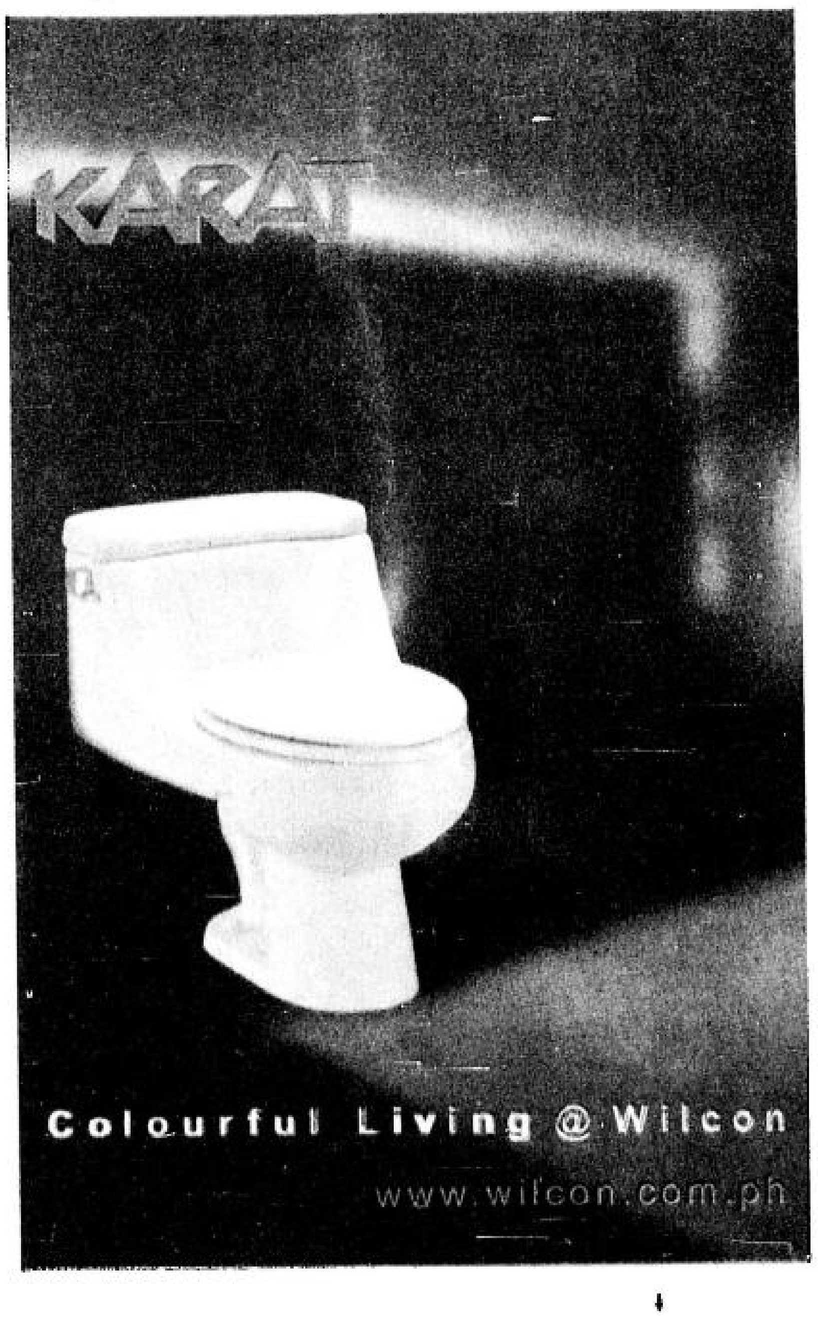

LIFESTYLE

CHELO BANAL-FORMOSO, Editor

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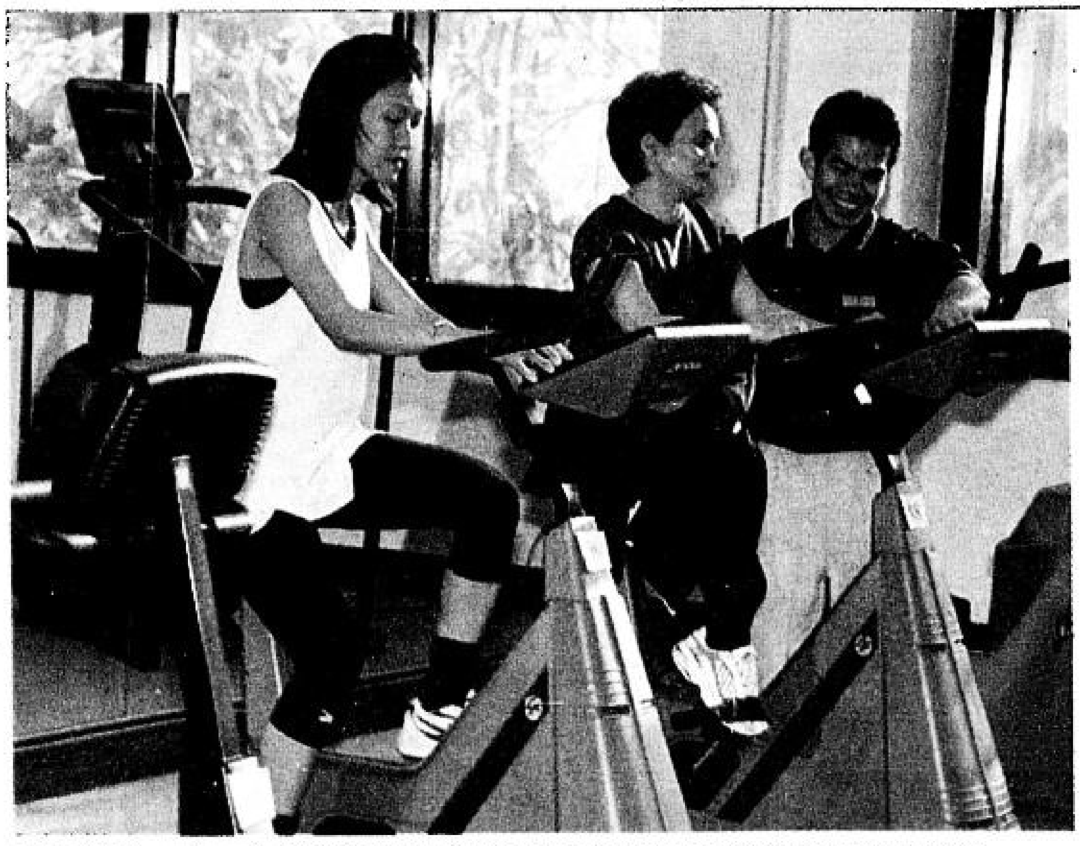

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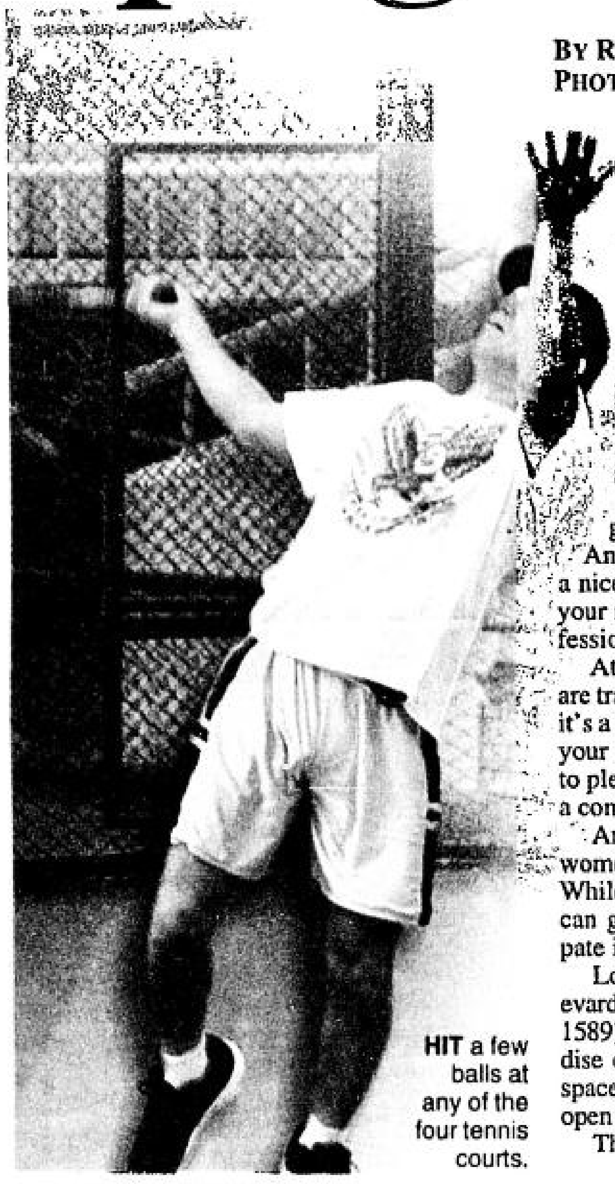
Spa getaway

By Rowena C. Burgos
Photos by Roger Margallo



HIT a few balls at any of the four tennis courts.

WORKING day in and day out can work your nerves to the point where you're itching to give your supervisor a piece of your mind. But sometimes instead of giving your boss an old-fashioned, neck-rolling, round-the-way cussing out, what you really need to do is get away.

A loofah scrub in your own cramped bathtub just can't compare to the kind of pampering and tender loving care you can get at most spas and sports clubs these days. And while your man may be able to give you a nice backrub, nothing can compare to having your muscles kneaded and worked on by a professional.

At The Westin Sports Club and Spa, workers are trained to cater to your every whim. Whether it's a fresh towel you need or just an ice cube for your mineral water, they make it their business to please you. Your job is to simply lay there in a comfy robe and slippers and be served.

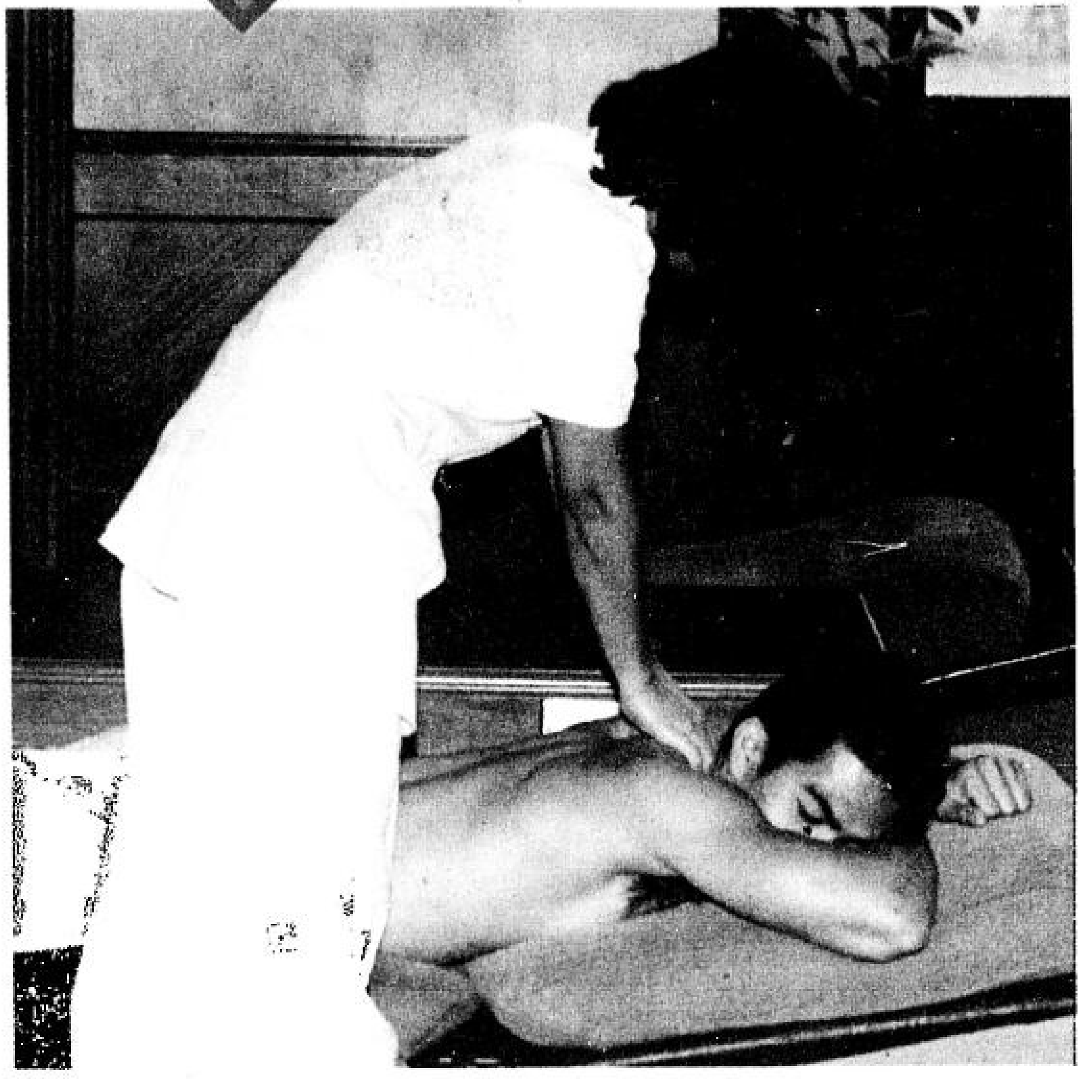
And the sports club and spa is not just for women. There's plenty for men to enjoy as well. While you're doing kickboxing or aerobics, he can go golfing, jogging, play tennis or participate in some other macho pastime.

Located at the CCP Complex, Roxas Boulevard, Pasay City (551-5555, local 1587/1588/1589), The Westin Philippine Plaza's fitness paradise covers a total area of 20,000 sq m of gym space, resort, gardens and recreation area. It's open from 6 a.m. to 10 p.m. daily.

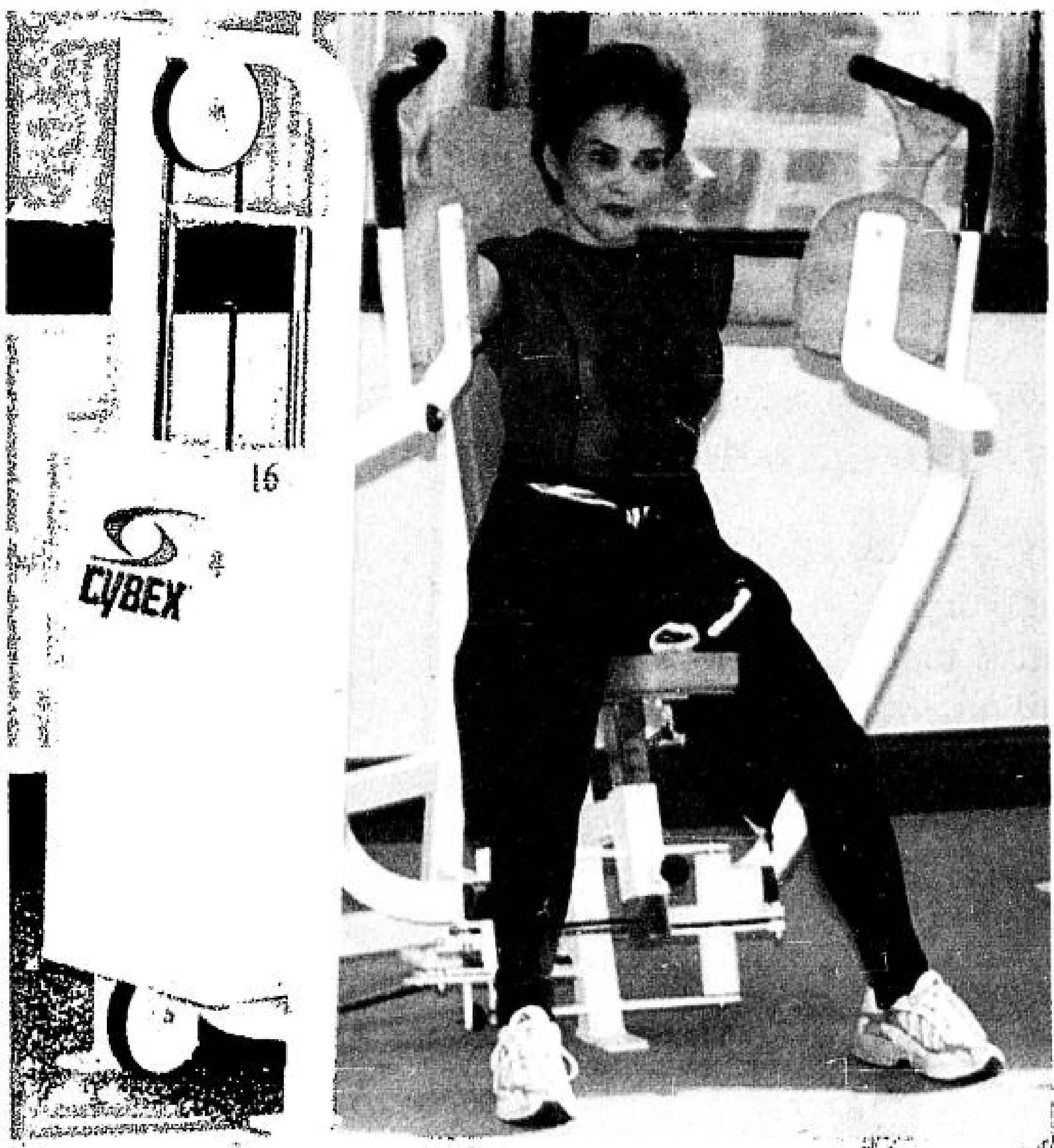
The gym is made up of the cardiovascular area,

SPA/ p.C4

There's something about carving out some time just for yourself to rest, reflect and rejuvenate



A **PROFESSIONALLY** trained masseuse will help banish tension at the massage center.



VIVIAN Zapanta, general manager of The Westin Sports Club and Spa, shows how to firm up muscles.

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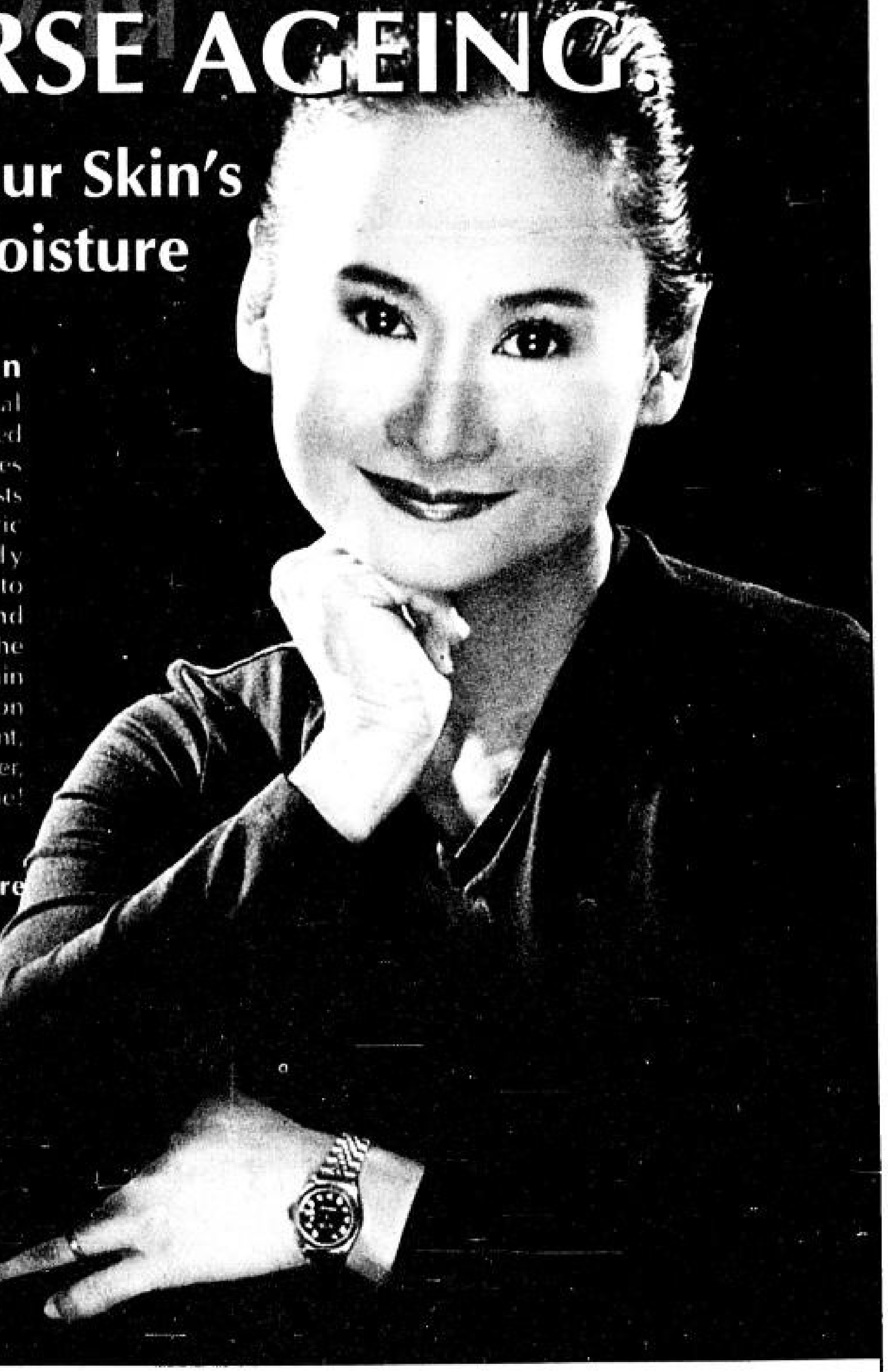

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Pain, pain go away

BY MARGE C. ENRIQUEZ
PHOTOS BY NEAL OSHIMA

PAIN is a friend, say practitioners in alternative medicine. It's a symptom that tells the patient there's an imbalance that needs to be addressed.

Intercare Wellness System is a clinic that specializes in treating bodily pain without drugs or surgery. It offers a program for patients to meet their individual needs. Patients who go to conventional doctors can get alternative treatments in acupuncture or chiropractic.

Last year, there were 629 million visits to a complementary and alternative medical practitioner in the United States.

"That's almost double the number of who goes to a primary care physician. One of the top 10 reasons a person would visit an alternative health-care physician is for pain syndromes," says Dr. Martin Camara. A doctor of chiropractic by profession, he's also one of the leading experts in complementary and alternative medicine in Asia. "Complementary" means that doctors work closely with other health-care practitioners.

In the United States, patients take responsibility for health care on their own. Although chiropractors, massage therapists, acupuncturists and rehab doctors abound, there isn't a single organization where the patient can go and have everything taken cared of.

ACUPUNCTURE needles open up the energy pathways.

Low-back pain

The Philippines has two Intercare centers, which is one of most advanced systems in the world.

"We wanted to concentrate on the conditions that people visit a complementary medical practitioner. We offer what are available in both conventional and in complementary and alternative medicines. This is like a one-stop shop. We wanted an integrated approach toward health care. We've become an organization focused on a single clinical condition which is musco-skeletal pain syndrome—pain arising from muscle, skeletal system or nerves," says Camara.

Intercare Center specializes in different healing methods that complement each other and also help meet the needs of the patients. The main center in Makati is the two-story, 400 sq m building that has 16 treatment rooms. The clinic has the capacity to see as many as 200 patients a day.

"Pain is the No. 1 reason people would see a complementary health-care physician. Seventy-five percent of our patients come to Intercare for low back pain. About 20 percent for neck pain, headaches and sports injuries," says Camara. There are other conditions since acupuncture treats a variety of conditions ranging from asthma, menstrual disorders, fatigue and allergies.

Integrated package

The organization puts up a package for the patient. "If somebody comes in with a low back problem, he can consult anyone of our physicians—a medical doctor who specializes in Traditional Chinese Medicine (TCM) through acupuncture, a chiropractic physician, a rehabilitation health-care physician, the myotherapist (a certified deep tissue massage therapist) or a physical therapist. As he enters the system, a diagnosis is made, the patient is provided with a protocol that is effective toward that condition," explains Camara.

For instance, if the patient complains of a low back problem, he usually consults the chiropractor that becomes his primary care physician. "As the patient is being evaluated for the treatment for the alignment of his spine and is eventually relieved of the nerve pressure, he can be referred to the other services that are of benefit for that condition. If the patient develops myofascial pain syndrome that's been there for a long time, the myotherapist can work with the physical therapist to relieve the spasm," says Camara.

"If there is a significant amount of inflammation that needs to be unloaded before the therapy can be done, he is referred to the sports medicine rehab physician who can prescribe medication.

"A lot of times, when you have chronic pain syndrome, there are disturbances in the circulation of energy which the acupuncture treats effectively. After a certain period of time, the acupuncturist works with the patient."

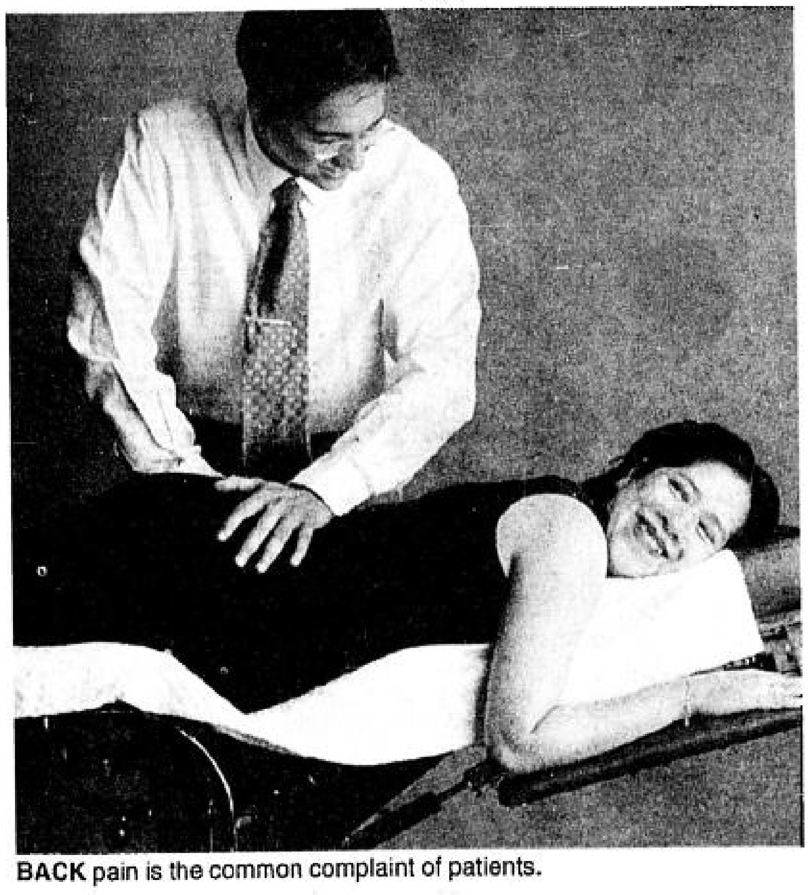
When Camara sees a pattern among his patients and sees that the problem traced to the flow of energy, he refers his patients to the acupuncture doctor. A patient once had a back surgery because a disc was unloaded. The surgery left a scar on the back. Because of the scar, the patient felt back pain. The acupuncturist helped remove the energy block in the patient's system.

Deep tissue massage

Camara is frequently asked about the difference between the myotherapy and the common massages such as shiatsu and reflexology. The myotherapists have a background in physical therapy or health-care science and are trained for hundreds of hours by Australian doctors. They undergo an exam and get their certification from the Royal Melbourne Institute of Technology.

In a massage place, the masseuses learn techniques that are applied on the client. Myotherapists understand that every patient is unique. They use different methods according to the patients' conditions.

The chiropractor works hand in hand with the myotherapist. For instance, if a person has a slip disc, he develops myofascial pain in the muscles, buttocks and legs. The chiropractor will adjust the patient's muscle and skeletal alignment to get rid of the nerve pressure. The myotherapist will massage the muscles around the disc.


BACK pain is the common complaint of patients.

THE ACUPUNCTURE doctor diagnoses the patient's condition by feeling the pulse.

Believe it or not, there are places that treat bodily pain without drugs or surgery

Common ailments such as headache, nausea, dizziness and migraine are due to muscle spasms in the upper part of the neck. This affects the nerves in that area. Aside from getting an adjustment from the chiropractor, the myotherapist can stretch and work out those tight areas.

When there's an inflammation, the injury causes tightness around the muscles that prevents them from moving properly. To get rid of the muscle spasms, the chiropractor makes an adjustment to relieve the pressure on the nerves. If the problem is recurrent, the patient is referred to the rehabilitation doctor who develops a program to develop the weak area.

Should a condition lie outside of Intercare's scope such as dislocation, fracture or severe menstrual bleeding, the doctors refer the patient to their colleagues.

Solicitous service

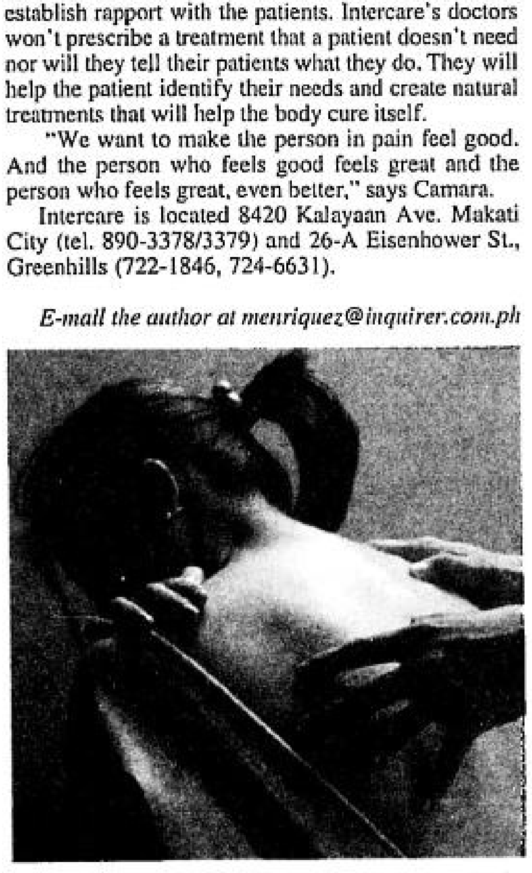
Intercare's team is composed of experts. Acupuncturist Dr. Alphonse Pantig was a Philippine medical board topnotcher. He studied TCM in Australia. Dr. Libby Santos was also trained in TCM. She also took up homeopathic medicine in Switzerland and myotherapy at the Royal Melbourne Institute of Technology. Dr. Mavi Tangco is a rehabilitation medicine practitioner who specializes in strengthening the back and developing sports conditioning programs for golf and tennis. Dr. Hans Tan is the only certified chiropractic sports physician.

Most patients prefer to go to Intercare than a hospital. They complain of the blaring radio music in the recovery room, the rude and impertinent behavior of the hospital staffers. At Intercare, the rooms are designed for healing. New Age or classical music wafts in the air. Soft lights and special beds for acupuncture and chiropractic facilitate relaxation and body adjustments. The patients feel the respect warmth and sincerity of Intercare's nurses and staffers. Everybody makes the effort to establish rapport with the patients. Intercare's doctors won't prescribe a treatment that a patient doesn't need nor will they tell their patients what they do. They will help the patient identify their needs and create natural treatments that will help the body cure itself.

"We want to make the person in pain feel good. And the person who feels good feels great and the person who feels great, even better," says Camara.

Intercare is located 8420 Kalayaan Ave. Makati City (tel. 890-3378/3379) and 26-A Eisenhower St., Greenhills (722-1846, 724-6631).

E-mail the author at menriquez@inquirer.com.ph


THE CHIROPRACTOR checks the placement of the spinal column and the muscles.

DR. Martin Camara adjusts the neck alignment.

MYOTHERAPIST removes stretches in the neck muscle to ease tension.

THE PHYSICAL therapist uses ultrasound treatment to relax the muscles.

Herbal hero concocts whiteners, astringent and breath freshener from greens

BY ALEX Y. VERGARA

THE PHILIPPINES remains a rich source of medicinal plants for cosmetic uses, but these gifts from nature have been virtually untapped save for countless papaya-based soaps, *gugo*-derived shampoos and *pito-pito* preparations of questionable efficacy.

German national Dietmar Rummel, who has spent almost a decade doing research on local medicinal plants, recently made this observation. Part of his study is found in a book titled "Cosmetic Uses of Philippine Medicinal Herbs," a handy volume published by Anvil Publications.

"Don't ask me anything about papaya soaps," he says with a naughty grin. "I don't believe in *pito-pito* either. These preparations, except those done by Dr. Dick Manubay, are too good to be true. They promise too much."

Now, what would *pitō-pito's* image model, rather, chief endorser, Ernie Baron, say?

As a "doctor of natural medicine," Rummel also wrote several unpublished books on the subject. One such volume provides women with a no-nonsense beauty guide. He's also a lecturer at the Technology and Livelihood Resource Center (c/o Beato Griarte, tel. 637-4018) in Pasig. His recent seminars dealt on "Advances in Skin Care" and "Advances in Hair and Body Care."

He specialized in pain management for 20 years in Germany before focusing on the study of medicinal herbs, right after moving to the Philippines. He used to collaborate with dermatologist Caridad Torres in formulating plant-derived skin-care products.

Rummel considers medicinal herbs endemic in South and Southeast Asia as more powerful than their European counterparts. He cites *lagundi* or *vitez negundo*, for instance, which has helped relieve his asthma.

"They are more potent because they are exposed to plenty of sunshine," he explains. "Exposure to the sun brings out more active ingredients in the plants."

And this holds true for a number of highly potent natural beauty products such as *tsaang gubat, takip kuhol, sulasi* and plain *dalanghita*. Rummel, for instance, is aware how crazy many Filipino women are about whitening their skin. There's no need for expensive astringents when a mixture of cucumber, *dalanghita*, water, alcohol and several preservatives will do.

Effective concoctions

Use it like Vilma Santos would Eskinol. After cleaning your face with cleansing cream or plain soap and water, wet a piece of cotton with the mixture. Then dab the cotton all over your face, neck and chest. The right amounts are listed down in Rummel's book. Although he didn't say if he uses the concoction himself, he vouches for its effectiveness.

SEEING GREEN. Rummel

BETOY JOHNSON

German national Dietmar Rummel says native plants are more potent because they are exposed to plenty of sunshine

"I should know [it's effective]," he declares. "We've tested it on both males and females for years."

What about those unsightly pimples? Then it's time for *sulasi* or holy basil to do the job. Boil the leaves and mix the boiled water with alcohol and a few drops of preservative before dabbing it on your face.

For healthy teeth and gums, Rummel swears by boiled *tsaang gubat*, the country's answer to Japanese green tea. In fact, a multinational company once asked him to research on the plant for its new toothpaste variant. But after Rummel submitted his findings, he didn't hear from the company again.

"It [*tsaang gubat*] fortifies the teeth and gums with its antibacterial action," he explains. "Boil its leaves and mix the water with ethyl alcohol before gargling with it."

Now that summer's just around the corner, Rummel also recommends a cheaper, more effective form of sunscreen derived from boiled *takip kuhol* or Indian *hydrocotyle*. Aside from blocking the darkening effects of the sun caused by UVB rays, it also blocks harmful UVA rays, one of the leading causes of skin cancer. If the dreaded Big C doesn't get you, then wrinkles from sun exposure will. UVA rays also deplete the skin of proteins, collagen and elastin.

"*Takip kuhol* is a potent anti-oxidant," says Rummel. "It neutralizes free radicals, which cause premature aging. Just rub it [*takip kuhol*] on the skin, preferably in the form of a cream."

Through the years, this creeping plant, which looks like an ordinary weed, has become rarer because of neglect and pollution. Fortunately, *takip kuhol* continues to thrive in provinces like Bulacan, says Rummel.

"But too much of a good thing, even if it's natural, can also cause toxic side effects," he warns. "That's why it's important to educate doctors as well as the public about alternative forms of medicine like plants and herbs."

Hardly tapped

The mild-mannered German laments the fact that the country's medicinal herbs are hardly tapped. Except for *sambong* and *lagundi*, no native plants have been processed recently for commercial use.

Sambong, a known diuretic, is said to be effective in pulverizing kidney stones. Of course, then health secretary and now senator Juan Flavier had endorsed *lagundi* as a proven cough and cold remedy. Pascual Laboratories manufactures *lagundi* tablets under the brand name Ascof Forte, while *sambong* is marketed as Re Leaf. These locally produced medicines are much cheaper than those produced by multinational drug companies.

"Medicinal plants are a billion-dollar industry in Germany and the United States," he says. "The Philippines doesn't even come close to a tenth of that."

Imagine the health and beauty benefits, not to mention profits, cash-strapped Filipinos would be able to derive from cheap medicines taken from nature. Total well-being is probably just a leaf away.

E-mail the author at avergara @inquirer.com.ph

INAUGURAL BLESSING
The Washington-based QXMedPro, a US migration consultative firm assisting Filipino nurses, teachers, engineers and IT professionals, inaugurated its new offices at the PSBank Tower, Suite 2106, Sen. Gil Puyat corner Ayala Avenue, Makati City. Gracing the opening were Brig. Gen. Lysias C. Cabusao and actress Lorna Tolentino. Also in photo are Daniel A. Canubas, QXMedPro president; Natividad C. Sacdal, QXMedPro director; Judge Avelino G. Halagao, chair; and engineer Oscar Z. Pangan, partner, QXMedPro.

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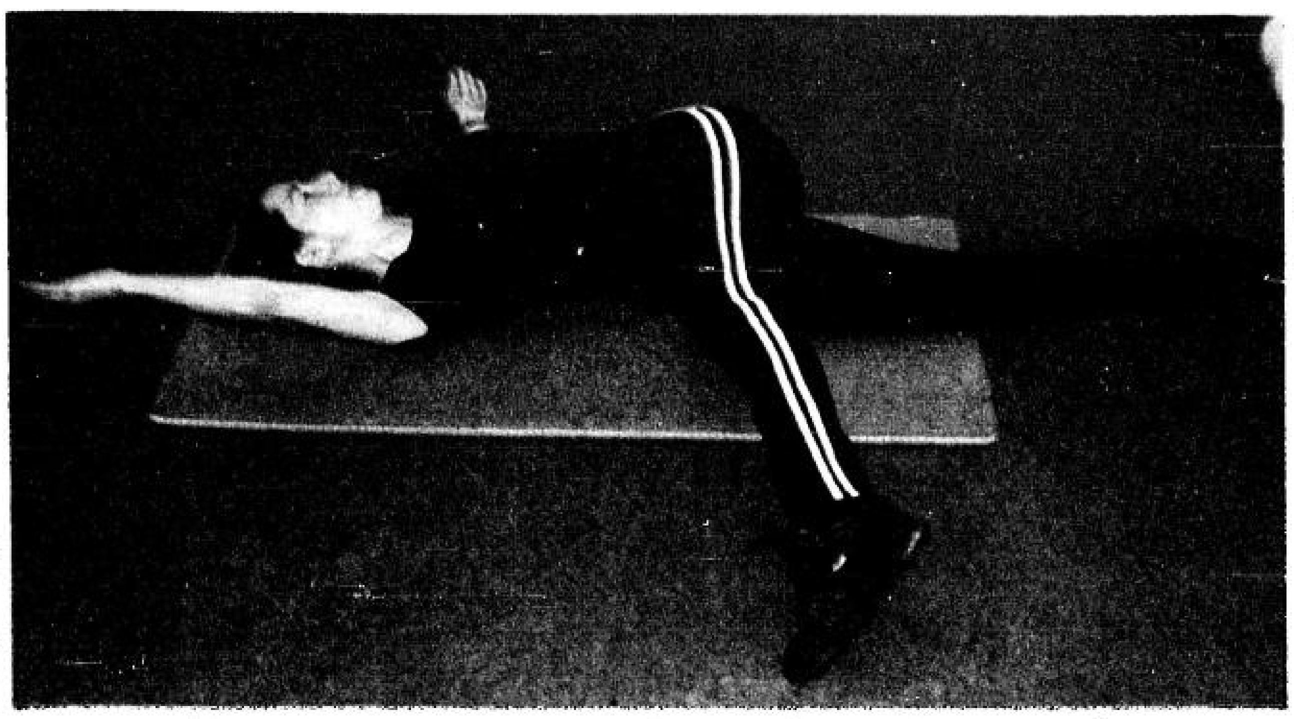
NATURAL MEDICINE
A new convenient and economical form/dosage of Re-Leaf (Sambong) is now in the market. Re-Leaf (Sambong) Forte 500 mg is the first and only natural remedy indicated for kidney stone dissolution and diuretic medicine for those with edema and congestive heart failure. Re-Leaf is a licensed product from PCHRD of DOST. It has been studied and scientifically validated for more than 20 years by Nirpromp, a consortium of top academic institutions and scientists in the Philippines. Call 411-9907 or 924-2158 or 70.

EXERCISE OF THE WEEK



Swiss army knife stretch

This yoga-inspired stretch is called the Swiss army knife because that's exactly what you look like. It stretches the hips, torso and chest.

Equipment:
Exercise mat

Exercise technique:
1. Lie down with legs straight and arms at shoulder level.
2. Bend your right knee and twist lower body to the left. Straighten your leg if you want to.
3. Take your left arm to your ear.
4. Look to the right.
5. Hold for 10-30 seconds.
6. To get out of the position, reverse the sequence. Look at the ceiling, return your left arm to shoulder level. Bend your right knee. Slowly untwist your lower body and straighten your leg.
7. Do the other side.

Performance tips:
1. Move slowly in and out of the exercise.
2. Pay attention to how your body feels. If you sense any kind of twinge in the lower back, do not do this exercise.

Pros and cons of Super Slow training

(From page C8)

the 10 seconds lifting and four seconds lowering. Well, at least, it will stop you from talking to your gym classmate and not concentrating on your form.

Super Slow training separates the boys from the men, so to speak, when it comes to strength machines. Since you are lifting so slowly, you will soon discover whether your gym has quality machines or not. Poor quality machines are not as smooth and have more friction compared to top-of-the-line equipment.

Westcott recommends trying Super Slow training when you can't break through your strength plateau. Do it for four to six weeks, then switch back to your regular routine.

As for me, I am tempted to give the method a try again as a variation in my program. I just have to get over that boredom thing. Of course, if future research does prove Ken Hutchins to be right and once a week is all you need to keep fit, I would be more than willing to be bored for 20 minutes.

For past articles and exercises, visit my website at www.tinajuanfitness.com

Hyatt to hold yoga sessions in March

THE YOGA Foundation of the Phils. (YFP) is holding the Jivamukti Yoga Tour 2001 this March. Jivamukti is one of the leading yoga centers in America today. Its founders, David Life and Sharon Gannon, together with teacher Duncan Wong, will conduct a series of yoga sessions at the Hyatt Hotel on March 1-6. The YFP aims to bring the authentic yoga practice to the Filipino people.

These sessions are open to the public. Tickets are available at various gyms and GNC stores or at the YFP office. Call 515-1268.

Members of the press are invited to attend the special master class for industry professionals on March 4, 2 p.m. at the Hyatt. Tickets are discounted at P800. Call the YFP for tickets.

WEEKLY DOSAGE

CONFERENCE. Lung diseases will be discussed extensively in the joint 21st International Union Against Tuberculosis and Lung Diseases-Eastern Region (IUATLD-ER) Conference and the 20th Annual Chest Convention of the Philippine College of Chest Physicians (PCCP) to be held on March 6-9 at the Edsa Shangri-La Hotel, Mandaluyong City. This joint meeting will tackle an array of topics involving different aspects in pulmonary medicine with special focus on tuberculosis. International experts have been invited to facilitate the discussions. Call 924-9204, 927-6426 local 295, 924-0144 (telefax) or e-mail pccp@I-next.net.

HEALTH CARE. NSA Exchange Corp. has formally launched a new line of beauty soap products in accordance with the company's goal of distributing wholly Filipino-made but globally competitive health and personal beauty products. The soap products are derived from all-natural, mainly organic sources and have been specially formulated to meet the specific needs of clients' skin types. These include YSA Botanica with Papaya, YSA Bleaching Soap, USA Whitening Soap, YSA Hypoallergenic Soap, YSA Clarifying Soap and YSA Rejuvenating Soap. YSA Skin Care Center has seven branches located in various parts of Metro Manila. Call 912-4594 to 68.

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THE GOODY FUN WAY!
Experience the goody fun way with new Gardenia Fun Buns. Delight in each bite of rich oozing flavor of chocolate. Each bun baked and packed fresh from the oven. So yummy. So goody! So funFILLING! Only from Gardenia.

AVAILABLE AT SUPERMARKETS AND CONVENIENCE STORES

Fit and fab femmes share their healthy options

Role models in their fields, these women have chosen healthy lifestyles

THEY are vibrant. They excel in their fields. They are beautiful inside and out. They are women in the pink of health.

Of the people who responded to a recent survey on eating, exercise and lifestyle habits of the "fit and popular," almost all have tapped into their instinct to be fit. Selected personalities in the local entertainment, social and business scene shared their secrets (flaws and pitfalls, too) on how they keep body and mind fit, exercise habits and fitness goals, stress busters, ailments or allergies, ways of maintaining good looks and the advice they can give others.

Specially selected by Healthy Options, these vivacious personalities were deemed to be inspiring role models who best exemplify the Healthy Options campaign pitch, "Choose Life, Choose Health." It's also not solely a matter of looking good but feeling good.

Unraveling their stay-in-shape efforts are Bianca Araneta, VJ, model and student; Margarita Fores, chef-restaurateur; Dyan Castillejo-Garcia, TV host of "Sports Unlimited"; and Toni Rose Gayda, a TV variety show host.

Here's a rundown of what they shared with other fitness buffs and health-conscious individuals out there.

PHOTO COURTESY OF PREVENTION MAGAZINE

	BIANCA ARANETA	MARGARITA FORES	DYAN CASTILLEJO	TONI ROSE GAYDA
How they got started on fitness	Just got interested.	First inspired by my significant other who's a fitness enthusiast. Got seriously into it when I saw results.	I was a professional tennis player, then continued on a fitness routine after.	Went to the gym.
Fitness goal or challenge	To tone up everywhere, build overall strength, lose inches.	To be fit at my age, to help me relieve stress from my work, to be muscular in a feminine way, to have clothes hang better, overall wellness, to lower body fat percentage and to have leaner thighs.	To get leaner (overall), sculpt muscles, abs with definition.	Boost energy level, keep in shape while working long hours, to sculpt a lean, flat abdomen.
Exercise habits	Aerobics, running and strength training several times a week; yoga and Pilates a few times a week.	Aerobics, tae bo, strength training and Pilates a few times a week, brisk walking and running on treadmill as aerobic workout; just starting yoga.	Strength training three to four hours a week, running and aerobics several times a week, Pilates once a week. My aerobic workout is a combination of either running, skipping rope, tae bo and biking.	Strength training, running and brisk walking.
Sleep well?	Yes—average of six to seven hours a day.	Five to six hours average.	I sleep very well! It varies depending on shooting schedule. Sometimes four to five hours if I'm shooting, but if none, seven to eight hours.	Yes, six to eight hours.
Stress busters/forms of relaxation	Massage, yoga/silence and introspection.	Through all forms of relaxation; relaxes by reading a book.	Exercise is the best way to beat stress and to prevent it because it puts one in a better frame of mind; prayer is also essential, massage, stretching, going out of town (to the beach/nature).	Reading my Bible, exercising, sleeping, reading.
Allergies or ailments prone to	Asthma.	None.	None. Hardly get sick. Thank the Lord for that.	I have had hypertension for the last 18 years. Inherited. But under control because I exercise.
Skin-care regimen	None really. Wash with a mild cleanser, use an SPF lotion always! Must have essential skin-care items are cleanser and moisturizer with sunblock.	I use eye cream, antiaging cream, natural rosewater as a toner and mint soap for bathing, lots of natural made soaps. I don't use brand-name soaps anymore.	Clean, moisturize and use night repair cream daily; exfoliate two to three times a week and apply masque twice a week. Not one essential skin-care item in particular, but I always need to have cleanser to remove makeup.	Never sleep with a dirty face. Essential skin-care item: eye cream for my dark circles.
Tips for gorgeous skin and hair	The basics: trim hair every six weeks, get a cut that suits your face and lifestyle. Don't smoke and drink lots of water.	Moisturize skin always. Don't touch blemishes. Don't overprocess hair.	Drink a lot of water. Eat healthy. Exercise. Take off makeup…	Maintain a healthy lifestyle.
Their diet	I don't eat beef and pork and try to eat lots of fruits and veggies.	Nonrestrictive, just try to eat healthy.	No pork and beef. Mainly fruit, vegetables, tofu, beans, chicken, fish and whole wheat bread. I try to stay away from fried food, food with preservatives (like ham, bacon, hotdog) and sweets, but still have it once in a while.	I make sure I eat a balanced diet.
What they eat for breakfast	Cereals (high fiber), fruits and yogurt.	A variety of things, whole-wheat bread with natural fruit grape jelly from Healthy Options, oatmeal or yogurt (with protein powder), fruits and cottage cheese and high fiber cereals.	Very light, fruit usually.	Oatmeal or cereal or wheat bread.
Favorite fruits and vegetables	Any exotic fruit. Local fruits are good, too!	Fruits—berries, lychees, pomelo, *chico*, mangosteen, pineapples, melons. Vegetables—asparagus, leafy green, spinach, okra.	Grapes, plums, cherries, strawberry, kiwis, *suha*, green mango, *lanzones*, mangosteen, *pongkan*, *rambutan*, guava (whatever is in season).	All vegetables, all fruits.
Preferred drinks and snacks	Fruit shakes, tea, fresh orange juice.	Fresh *limonada* with equal at Cibo, Myoplex shake with fresh fruits, a half of *tramezzino* in Cibo with spinach and mozzarella or with *gamberetti* and fat-free mayo.	Drinks—fresh fruit juice combinations like carrot-orange, banana-papaya. Snacks—fruit and rice crackers.	Water, anything I see when I'm hungry.
Amount of what they drink in a day	Not enough.	Six to eight glasses.	About seven to eight glasses, more when exercising.	I try to drink eight to 10 glasses a day.
Do they read the labels of the food they buy?	Yes.	All the time.	Always—check for sugar, sodium and fat content. Also to check the preservatives used.	Sometimes.
Their vitamin, mineral and herbal supplements	Multivitamins and Vitamin C.	A woman's multivitamin, folic acid, chitosan before heavy meals and echinacea. For herbal supplements I take echinacea.	Vitamin C, E, multiple vitamin, calcium supplement. I'm starting to take flaxseed.	Vitamin E, C, multivitamin.
Eating habit "fixes" they had to overcome	Avoid or tone down eating chocolates.	Not skipping breakfast, no munchies at night (still get this sometimes), stopping carbonated drinks and eating.	I used to love eating bread. I could eat half a loaf of whole-wheat bread for lunch (I love nothing with it). Now I limit the bread intake, especially in the evening.	Avoiding sweets, which I love.
What their friends/relatives say about their healthy habits	That it's pretty good and disciplined.	They wonder how I've fitted so much exercise into my busy schedule.	They know I love to exercise and do wonder how I manage to stick to it consistently.	They know I try to be religious about it.
Advice to others who want to stay fit and healthy	Stay motivated. Do everything in moderation and stick with it.	Make time for exercise (no excuses). Make it a lifestyle. But don't stop enjoying life. Still enjoy food you like, but in moderation.	Make exercise/sports a priority, meaning, put it in your schedule of "things to do today" list. Find an exercise or sport you enjoy (the gym is not for everybody). Be active with your spouse or find a friend to work out with. Vary your workouts so it doesn't get monotonous.	Work at it.

Spa getaway

(From page C1)

which is equipped with Cybex Life Fitness machines for warming up and designed to increase endurance; the progressive resistance room which features selectorized weight machines for toning and firming up muscles; and the free weight room which showcases an array of dumbbells and barbells to help increase endurance and sculpt the muscles.

Well-trained fitness professionals offer cardio kickboxing, step classes, cardio-combo, high and low impact aerobics and Latin aerobics every day at the studio which has an aerobic sprung floor, designed to lessen impact on joints and prevent injuries caused by jarring movements.

After a strenuous workout, one can take a break at the juice bar, relax on the sundeck or check out the pro shop for souvenir items.

Pamper your body

Men and women have felt the urge to rejuvenate themselves since time immemorial and the new millennium reveals no signs of our tiring of fashionable health treatments.

At the spa, you can cool down in the steam room or sauna and the relaxation pools and hot whirlpool after a strenuous workout.

The massage center's professionally trained masseuses will help banish your tension and provide an antidote to stress either at the center, the poolside or your hotel room. Guests can choose from a myriad of techniques including Swedish (long and kneading strokes), Shiatsu (dry massage derived from acupressure), tension-release therapy (concentrated on the head, shoulders and back), combination of Swedish and Shiatsu, aromatherapy (involves the application of essential oils) and zone therapy (paraffin wax treatment).

Or you can try the spa treatments like the body mask, firming body polish, marine gel body wrap, detox body wrap, cell renewal (a deep cleansing facial treatment) and the calming back polish (an exfoliating treatment for the back).

But the fitness experience does not end in the gym and spa. The hotel's best feature are its resort facilities. Hit a few balls at any of the four tennis courts. Swim a few laps in the lagoon-shaped pool where you can loll for hours and catch the sunset by the bay. Or work up a sweat running the 500-meter jogging trail. For golf enthusiasts, there's the golf aqua range where you can practice your swings at the 10-stall driving range, with all the balls heading toward Manila Bay, or have a round on the 18-hole putting green.

Harmony of body, mind and soul

It's easy to see why more and more people are going to sports clubs and spas these days. Although they have grown in popularity in recent years, the concept is nothing new. For centuries, man has sought out hot springs and clean mountain air to cure various ailments.

But nowadays, many doctors incorporate diet, stress relief and exercise into treatments they prescribe. In hospitals, nurses routinely offer massage, reflexology and aromatherapy alongside conventional types of care. And therapists themselves, instead of offering an alternative to orthodox treatments, refer to their skills as complementary.

GYM space amid a resort garden

"Being fit means feeling well and looking good. It also means the ability to get on with your life without becoming exhausted by normal daily activities. So as long as you're healthy and in good shape, you need not have a beautiful body. Just incorporate health and fitness into your lifestyle to not only give you greater physical strength but a sense of inner peace and confidence as well," says Vivian Zapanta, general manager of The Westin Sports Club and Spa.

So think not of a spa getaway like some other trip where you stuff yourself with food or drink yourself into oblivion and arrive home needing another vacation. After spending time at the right spot, you go home refreshed, relaxed and ready to take on the world again. And your boss just might be glad to see you back at the office.

E-mail the author at rburgos@inquirer.com.ph

A spirit lover visits her every night

INNER AWARENESS

Jaime T. Licauco

RECEIVED an interesting e-mail from a Filipina, now studying in Japan, who called herself Capri. While still in the Philippines she was visited by a male spirit who would kiss her and have sex with her, which she welcomed at first. When she went to Japan, he followed her and the same thing happened again. Here are the highlights of her letter:

"I was about to go to sleep one evening when I saw something like fog or smoke enveloping me. With my eyes closed I felt someone embrace me tightly.

"I was under stress at that time—physically, emotionally and spiritually.

"Then this entity kissed me on the lips for a few seconds, then left.

"At first I couldn't breathe, but I let him kiss me anyway. After that mysterious kiss and tight embrace, I felt so calm and relaxed like I'd never felt before.

"A few weeks later, he came back just when I was about to fall asleep. This time he not only kissed me, he made love to me.

"I felt my soul or spirit lifted up and reunited with him.

"One thing led to another, and so I would welcome his visits. But I noticed he would only visit me when I was tired, stressed and in need of calmness. Soon I could even communicate with him mentally.

"Later, the amorphous fog or smoke began to take the shape and the solidity of a real man. I could now see his eyes and touch his body whenever I was in that very relaxed state you call the alpha level of the brain waves. We would make love or reunite with each other for a few seconds. I really liked and enjoyed those moments with my invisible lover. I figured he was my soul mate who'd come to visit me.

"Then one time when he visited me again, he held or touched my neck. This is one part of my body I am very sensitive about. I felt he was choking me. I told him to let go of me—and he did. But from that time on his visits, which previously were pleasurable for me, became a threat. I saw the sadness in his eyes when he left. After that incident, he never visited me again.

"I went to Japan to study without anymore incident. But then last week, something happened. I was about to fall asleep when I felt someone crawling into my bed. At first I did not pay attention to it because I knew I was all alone in the room. Then I felt him lie down beside me. I felt him adjusting his position because my bed is only for one person. He then positioned himself on top of me. I felt his heavy weight and I could hardly breathe.

"He wanted to kiss me but I could not feel his kiss. I only saw gray shapeless smoke without a face. He wouldn't get off me. I could not move my body. But I was still in control of my mind. I was on the verge of crying.

"Then I prayed the Lord's Prayer and he started to fade until he was completely gone. It was only then that I could breathe and move my body again.

"Now I'm afraid the spirit may come back. When I tell my friends about these incidents, they either don't believe me or they question my sanity. They think I'm only imagining things because I have no boyfriend and they say I'm just hoping my soulmate will come along. Is he really my soul mate or just a spirit? Please enlighten me. I usually dream of places and events I am very familiar with in my dreams but not when I'm awake."

What a story! This can be used as a plot for a supernatural movie which is very popular in Hollywood. Remember "Ghost" starring Demi Moore as the widow and Patrick Swayze as the ghost who was kissing and making love to his wife after he was killed?

At first your story may indeed be regarded by other people as merely imaginary because of your longing for a boyfriend, lover or soul mate. But I have known perfectly happy married women who have also been visited by or had sex with spirit lovers.

Technically, a male spirit who sexually molests living women or who make love to them is called an Incubus. On the other hand, a female spirit who has sex with a living man is called a Succubus. During the middle ages, the Catholic church investigated and documented numerous cases of sexual molestations of living beings by invisible spirits. These were usually in connection with the Inquisition or witch trials. It was believed then that witches made pacts with the devil who made love to them. This idea dies very hard, indeed. Many Catholics still believe that any form of sexual encounter with spirits is the work of the devil.

This is not always so. I know of the case of a very famous Filipina singer who confessed to me that her husband used to visit her and make love to her after he had died and she welcomed his amorous visits. She said she recognized the spirit of her dead husband.

There are men and women who are prone or susceptible to spirit contacts because they are psychically open or have medium tendencies. So earthbound spirits approach them either to experience sexual pleasure again or to relay an important message to some living person through the medium or channel.

I do not think the spirit that visited you is bad, neither is he the devil. He is probably just an earthbound spirit who saw you as a good channel or medium. He also probably saw you as needing some solace, comfort or male companionship. He also probably sensed your desire for sexual satisfaction. That is a perfectly human and natural desire and you should not feel embarrassed about that.

I cannot tell for sure whether the spirit who visited you in Japan was the same one who made love to you in the Philippines. Most likely it was. But what I am sure of is that he is not your soul mate. For a better understanding of soul mates, please read my book "Soul Mates, Karma and Reincarnation" which is available at all branches of National Bookstore in Metro Manila and some provinces. To protect you against demonic possession or molestation, try to wear a St. Benedict's medal that's been blessed or charged by a Benedictine priest in the official manner prescribed by the church.

Address letters to this column to Rm. 308 Prince Plaza I, 106 Legaspi St., Greenbelt, Makati City or e-mail jlicauco@geocities.com. Visit www.angelfire.com/journal/licauco. Listen to my dzMM radio program every Sunday at 6-8 p.m.

Instructional course on rhinoplasty

THE PHILIPPINE Society for Cosmetic Surgery (PSCS), with the Japan Society of Aesthetic Surgery, presented last year the 1st World Congress on Cosmetic Surgery at the Edsa Shangri-La Plaza Hotel and a live surgical demonstration at the Quezon City Medical Center. These events brought to the country renowned cosmetic surgeons from all over the world (USA, Japan, Brazil, Australia, Thailand, China, etc.) Moreover, the newly organized Asian Academy of Cosmetic Surgery has been expanded to cover Australia and will henceforth be known as the Asia Pacific Academy of Cosmetic Surgery. The 2nd International Congress will be held in Shanghai in 2002.

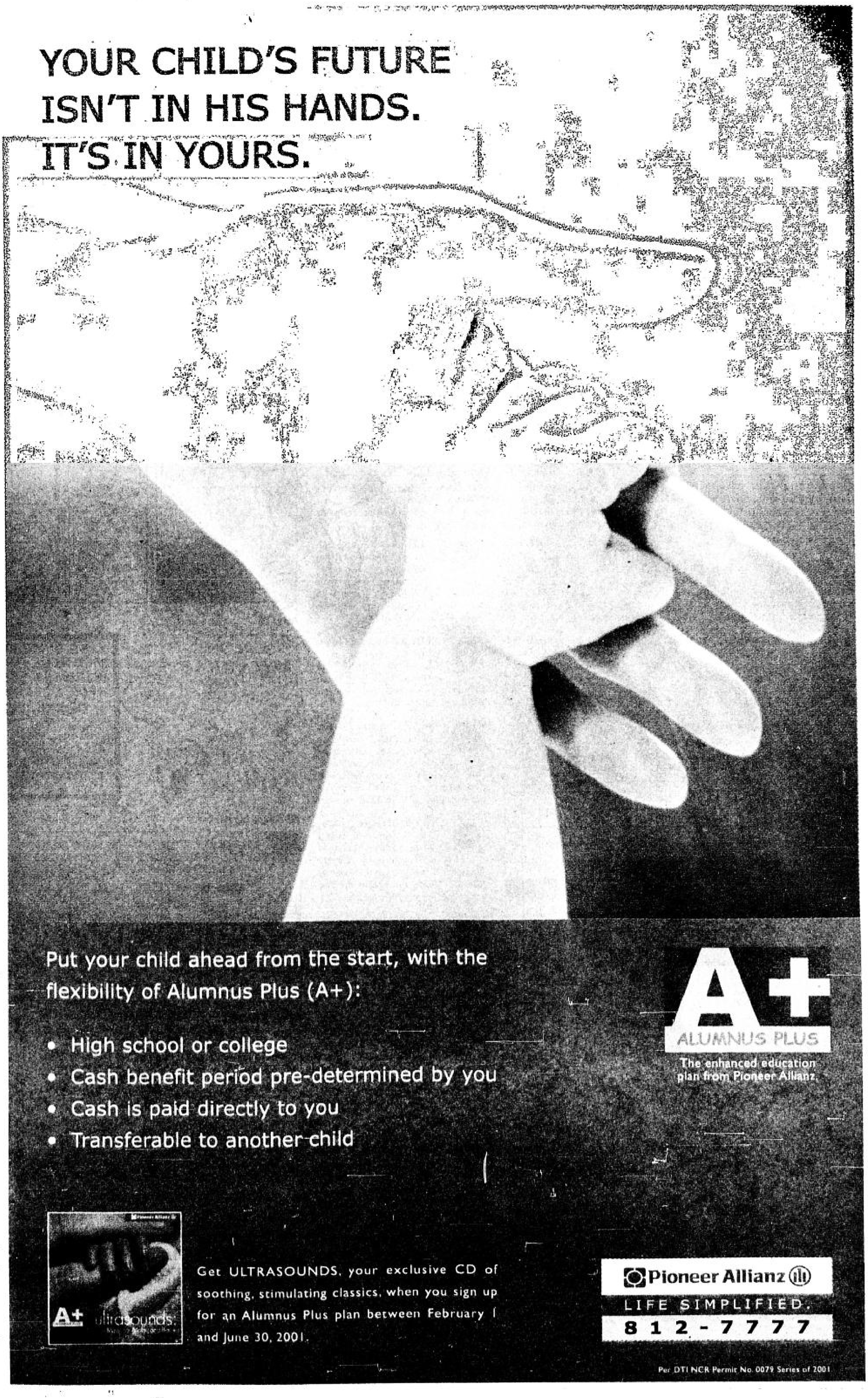
On March 11, at the De Los Santos Medical Center in QC, the PSCS will offer a one-day instructional course on rhinoplasty. This affair will be comprehensive, with a lecture series in the morning to be followed by surgical demonstrations in the afternoon.

The topics to be covered are: Basic Anatomy and Physiology of the Nose, Preoperative Evaluation and Consultation, Implant Types and Designs, Anesthesia and Sedation, Augmentation (Silicone and Conchal Cartilage), Alarplasty (Base and Rim Resections), Bulbous Nose Repair, Injected Noses, Cleft Lip Nose Repair, Nasal Bone Fractures and Septo-rhinoplasty and Errors and Complications in Rhinoplasty.

After the lunch break, leading specialists will perform the following: carving silicone blocks or modifying performed implants, correction of cleft lip nose deformity, augmentation with conchal cartilage graft, augmentation with silicone implant, alarplasty (base and rim resections), septorhinoplasty and treatment of injected nose (paraffin or silicone).

This undertaking by the PSCS is part of its commitment to the continuing medical education of various specialists engaged in the practice of cosmetic surgery. This course gives a rare opportunity to medical students and residents to familiarize themselves with cosmetic surgery topics and procedures since this specialty is notoriously neglected by tradition or by necessity in most medical school curricula and residency training programs.

Registration fee is P4,500 (pre-registration rate before March 11) or P5,000 (for onsite registration). Call Dr. Corazon Collantes-Jose (819-2966, 411-4231), Dr. Charrie Ballecer (840-1222/1757) or Dr. Mariano Agcaoili (724-3675/3511).



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ISN'T IN HIS HANDS.
IT'S IN YOURS.

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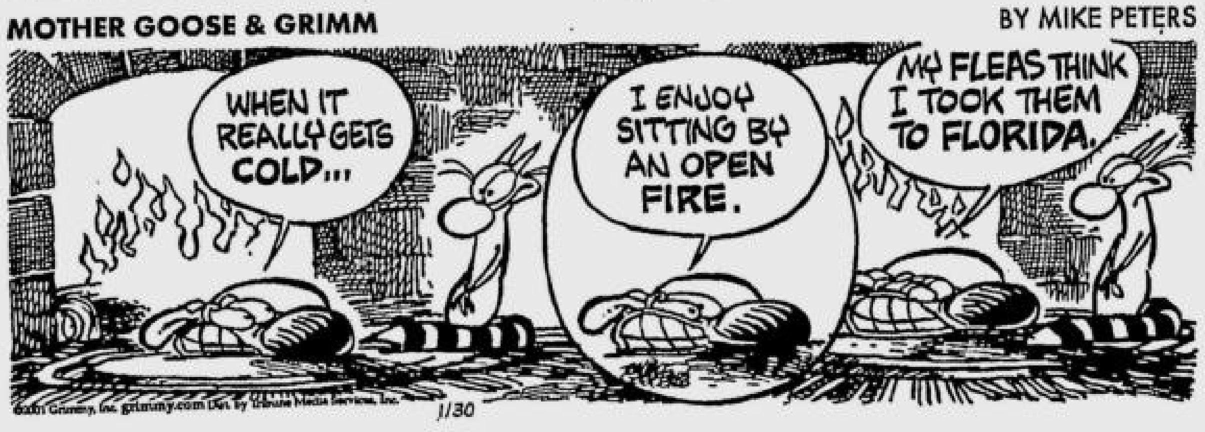
Per DTI NCR Permit No. 0079 Series of 2001

COMICRelief

MOTHER GOOSE & GRIMM

BY MIKE PETERS


WHEN IT REALLY GETS COLD...
I ENJOY SITTING BY AN OPEN FIRE.
MY FLEAS THINK I TOOK THEM TO FLORIDA.
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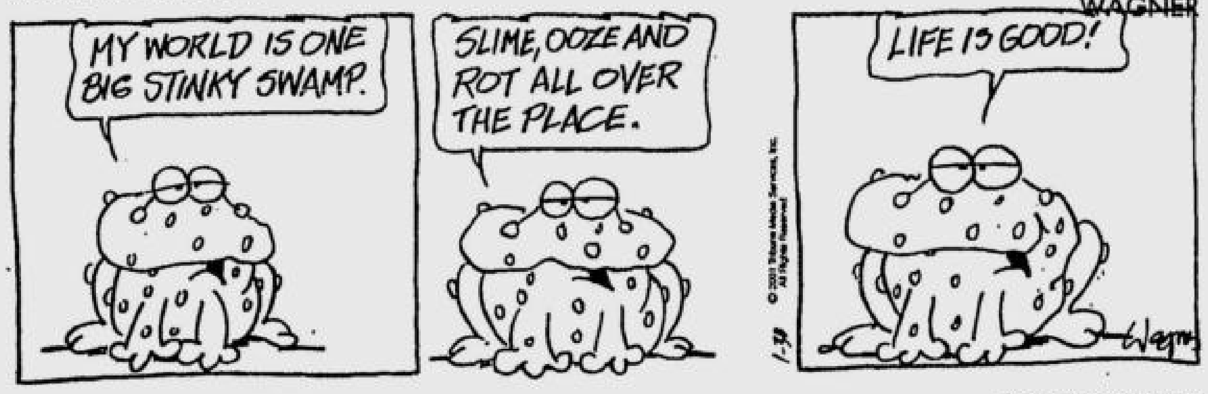
1/30

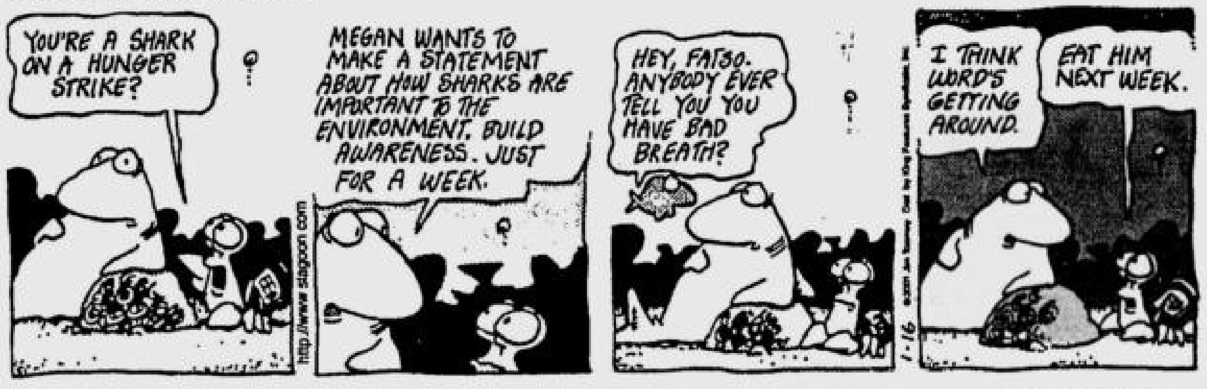
ANIMAL CRACKER

BY FRED WAGNER


MY WORLD IS ONE BIG STINKY SWAMP.
SLIME, OOZE AND ROT ALL OVER THE PLACE.
LIFE IS GOOD!
Wagner

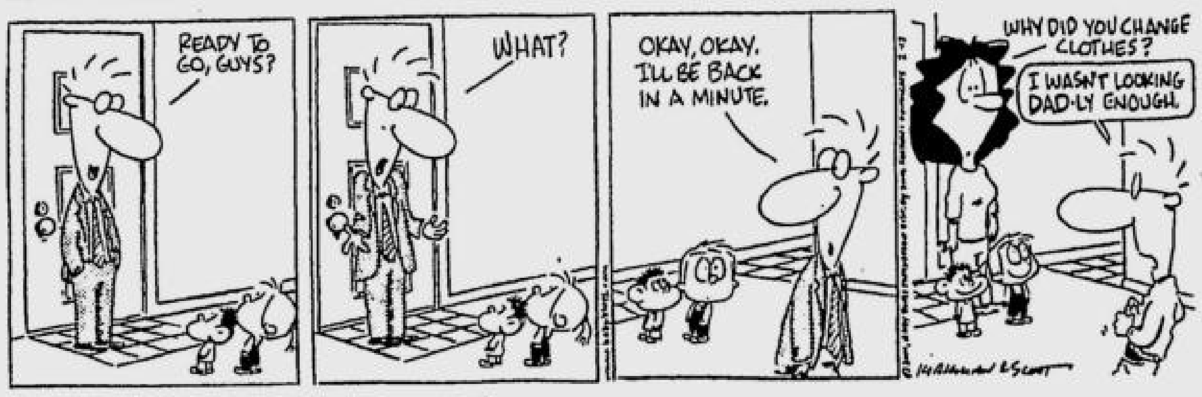
SHERMAN'S LAGOON

BY JIM TOOMEY


YOU'RE A SHARK ON A HUNGER STRIKE?
MEGAN WANTS TO MAKE A STATEMENT ABOUT HOW SHARKS ARE IMPORTANT TO THE ENVIRONMENT. BUILD AWARENESS. JUST FOR A WEEK.
HEY, FATSO. ANYBODY EVER TELL YOU YOU HAVE BAD BREATH?
I THINK WORD'S GETTING AROUND.
EAT HIM NEXT WEEK.
http://www.slagoon.com
1-16

BABY BLUES

BY JERRY SCOTT


READY TO GO, GUYS?
WHAT?
OKAY, OKAY. I'LL BE BACK IN A MINUTE.
WHY DID YOU CHANGE CLOTHES?
I WASN'T LOOKING DAD-LY ENOUGH.
KIRKMAN & SCOTT

HOROSCOPE

BY EUGENIA LAST

CELEBRITIES BORN ON THIS DAY: Elizabeth Taylor, Joanne Woodward, Ralph Nader, Adam Baldwin, Chelsea Clinton

Happy Birthday: You know how to please a crowd and will have absolutely no problem attracting attention. You will captivate others with your ideas and can make gains that seemed impossible in the past. The catch will be to not waste your energy on those who can't help you. You need to focus on those positioned in high places first. Your numbers: 2, 14, 18, 23, 27, 29

ARIES (March 21-April 19): It's back to the drawing board to make changes to that important proposal you have been working on. You may run into past acquaintances through work-related functions. Be polite.

TAURUS (April 20-May 20): Negotiations with clients will lead to new and interesting developments. You can pick up valuable information if you listen to what others say. Read between the lines and put yourself in their shoes before you make a decision.

GEMINI (May 21-June 20): Hidden assets are likely to be cashed in. Take care of legal matters that have been holding you back. Tie up those loose ends so that you get back on track.

CANCER (June 21-July 22): Don't be drawn into uncomfortable situations. Someone from your past is likely to come back into your life. Don't be afraid to open that door again.

LEO (July 23-Aug. 22): Expect opposition from family as well as your colleagues. Keep your ideas to yourself. Keep your own work up to date, and don't worry too much about what others are doing.

VIRGO (Aug. 23-Sept. 22): Get together with friends you don't see that often. Don't hesitate to sign up for courses that will bring you additional work skills.

LIBRA (Sept. 23-Oct. 22): New romantic relationships will develop through group activities. Don't expect everyone you work with to be on your side. Talk is cheap, and someone may try to lead you astray.

SCORPIO (Oct. 23-Nov. 21): Partners will be full of enthusiasm, but they will also be overly emotional. Try to balance the situation carefully to avoid confusion and uncertainty. Give your mate space.

SAGITTARIUS (Nov. 22-Dec. 21): You can make career changes that will help turn your financial situation around. Believe in yourself and so will all those you encounter. You should start your own part-time business.

CAPRICORN (Dec. 22-Jan. 19): What a great time to make those changes you've been thinking about. You need an updated image that will help you present yourself and your goals with more confidence.

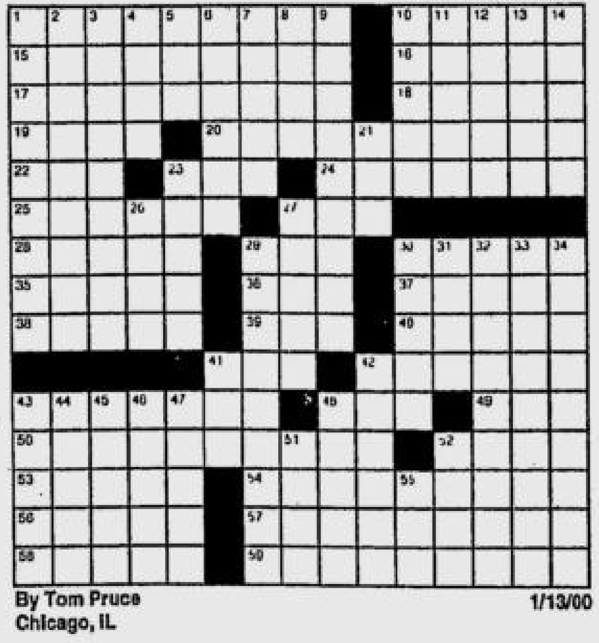
AQUARIUS (Jan. 20-Feb. 18): You will experience difficulties with people you have to work with. Try to understand, but don't do the work for them. Don't let others' complaints get you down.

PISCES (Feb. 19-March 20): Pleasure trips will turn out better than you anticipated. You need to relax and let your imagination treat you to a medley of fantasies.

Birthday Baby: If you set your mind on something, nothing will stand in your way. You're a leader in the making and are determined to go to the necessary lengths to do, say and attain what you want.

DAILY CROSSWORD

TMSPuzzles@aol.com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By Tom Pruce
Chicago, IL

1/13/00

ACROSS
1 Spoil the appearance of
10 Company images
15 Energy sapper
16 Small, brownish antelope
17 Kuala Lumpur resident
18 Tangle or untangle
19 Auspices
20 Starlet's hope
22 __ sequitur
23 Assam or hyson
24 Sondheim's "__ Todd"
25 Garden blooms
27 Cleaned one's plate
28 Supply the food
29 Schuss
30 Packs down
35 Mr. T's group
36 Container with a tap
37 Native Alaskan
38 Survives
39 "William Wilson" writer
40 Long-handled spoon
41 Functional quill
42 Put back in the granary
43 Less stable
48 Is down with
49 Small viper
50 Barry of "My Three Sons"
52 Bond's alma mater
53 Iridescent gems
54 Lost intentionally
56 Malicious ill will
57 Paste and cement
58 "The Planets" composer
59 Cars with rumble seats

DOWN
1 Fiendish
2 Ladylove
3 Gypsum crystals
4 Tarkenton of football
5 Climbing vine
6 Radon and neon
7 City on the Erie Canal
8 Leo's comment
9 Lily Tomlin's operator
10 Greene of "Bonanza"
11 Emulate Cicero
12 Accepted as fact
13 Fatter than fat
14 Like choked deltas
21 Ram's mate
23 Periods in office
26 Chair or bench
27 City near Canton
29 Major celeb
30 Whoppers
31 Lamenter's cry
32 Of intervention
33 Drives onto the shoulder
34 Verticality
41 Cribbage item
42 Positioned in order
43 Agitate a liquid
44 River horse
45 Help
46 Scotsman's skirts
47 Map within a map
48 Disturbance
51 Hubbub
52 Work on manuscripts
55 Blockhead

PREVIOUS PUZZLE ANSWER

U	C	L	A	■	M	A	I	Z	E	■	I	T	C	H
R	O	O	D	■	A	G	N	E	S	■	C	H	O	U
D	I	G	S	I	N	O	N	E	S	H	E	E	L	S
U	F	O	■	D	U	N	S	■	■	O	A	S	I	S
■	■	■	P	L	A	Y	■	P	R	O	G	E	N	Y
B	A	R	R	E	L	■	C	R	A	V	E	■	■	■
O	H	I	O	■	■	I	R	E	N	E	■	H	A	I
H	O	L	D	S	O	N	E	S	G	R	O	U	N	D
R	Y	E	■	C	O	L	E	S	■	■	U	N	T	O
■	■	■	H	A	Z	E	L	■	M	U	S	S	E	L
C	A	B	A	R	E	T	■	K	E	P	T	■	■	■
A	N	I	T	A	■	■	O	N	T	O	■	S	A	T
W	O	N	T	B	U	D	G	E	A	N	I	N	C	H
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D	E	E	R	■	N	E	E	D	S	■	O	P	E	N

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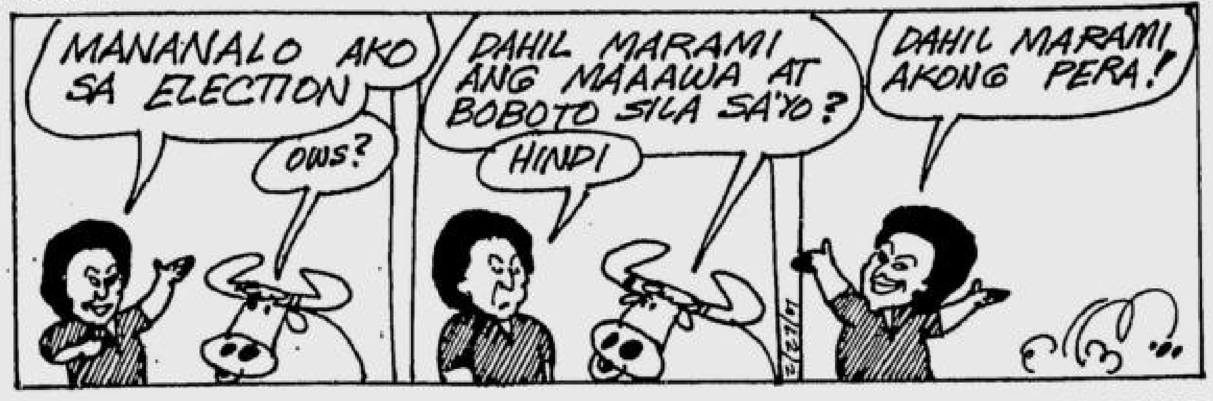
1/13/01

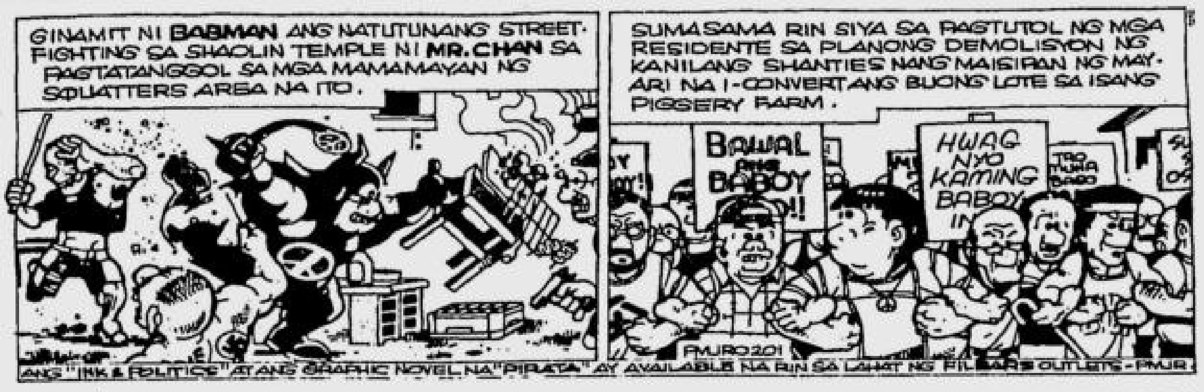
A. LIPIN

BY JESS ABRERA


MANANALO AKO SA ELECTION
OWS?
DAHIL MARAMI ANG MAAAWA AT BOBOTO SILA SA'YO?
HINDI
DAHIL MARAMI AKONG PERA!

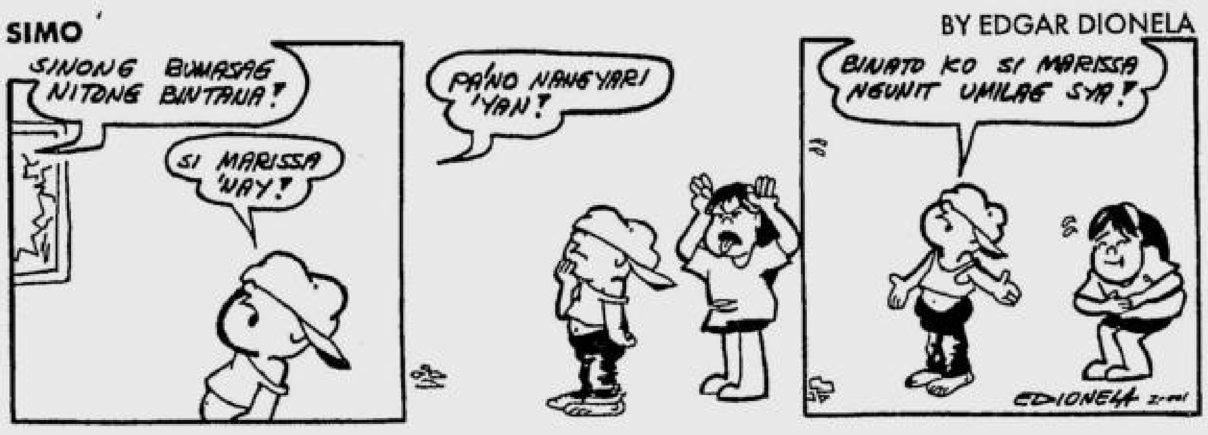
PUGAD BABOY

BY P.M. JUNIOR


GINAMIT NI BABMAN ANG NATUTUNANG STREET-FIGHTING SA SHAOLIN TEMPLE NI MR. CHAN SA PAGTATANGGOL SA MGA MAMAMAYAN NG SQUATTERS AREA NA ITO.
SUMASAMA RIN SIYA SA PAGTUTOL NG MGA RESIDENTE SA PLANONG DEMOLISYON NG KANILANG SHANTIES NANG MAISIPAN NG MAY-ARI NA I-CONVERT ANG BUONG LOTE SA ISANG PIGGERY FARM.
BAWAL ANG BABOY
HWAG NYO KAMING BABOY
PMJR0201
ANG "INK & POLITICS" AT ANG GRAPHIC NOVEL NA "PIRATA" AY AVAILABLE NA RIN SA LAHAT NG FILBAR'S OUTLETS - PMJR

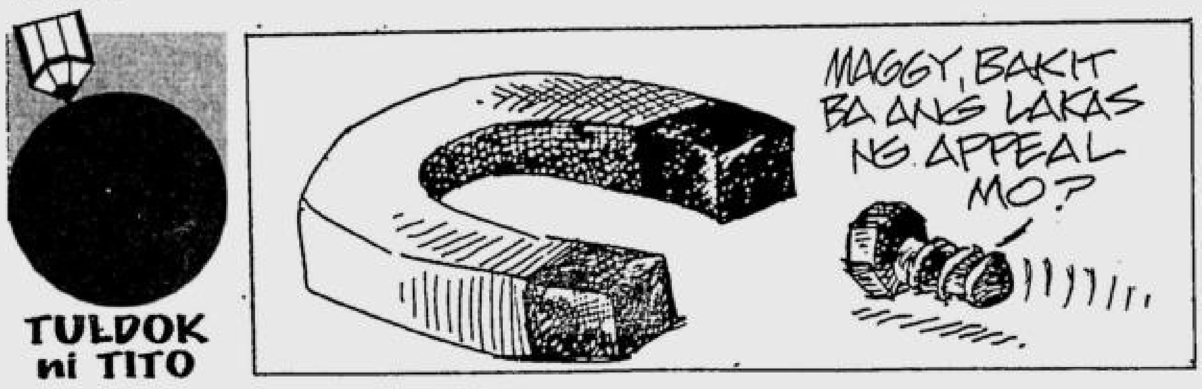
SIMO

BY EDGAR DIONELA


SINONG BUMASAG NITONG BINTANA?
SI MARISSA 'NAY?
PA'NO NANGYARI 'YAN?
BINATO KO SI MARISSA NGUNIT UMILAG SYA?
EDIONELA 2-01

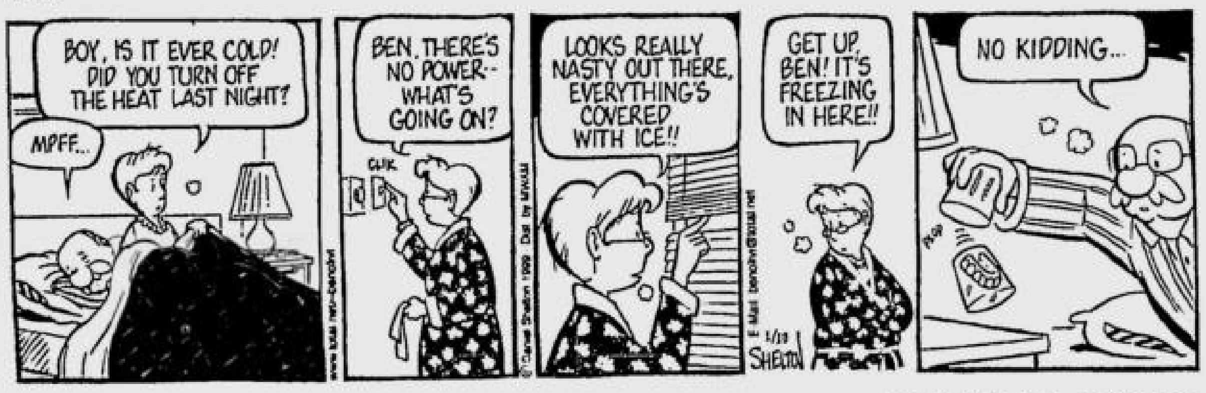
TULDOK

BY PAPU & TATUM MILAMBILING


TULDOK ni TITO
MAGGY, BAKIT BA ANG LAKAS NG APPEAL MO?

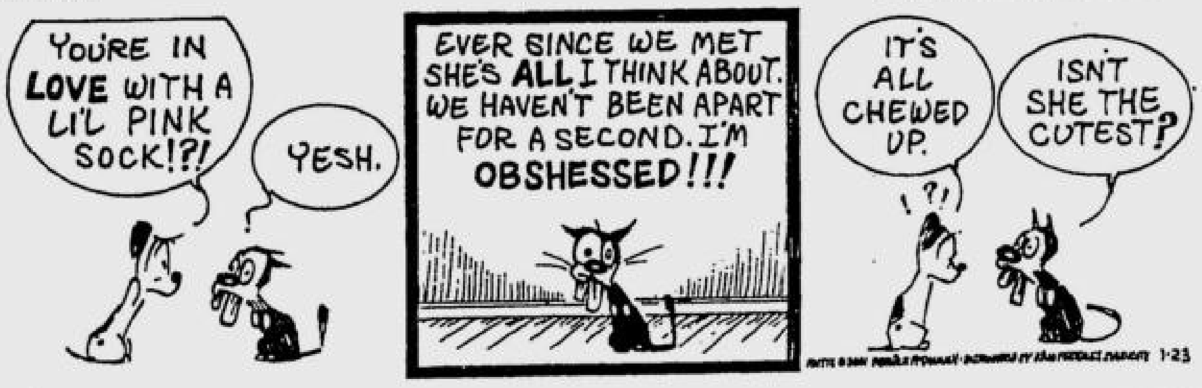
BEN

BY DANIEL SHELTON


BOY, IS IT EVER COLD! DID YOU TURN OFF THE HEAT LAST NIGHT?
MPFF...
BEN, THERE'S NO POWER-- WHAT'S GOING ON?
CLIK
LOOKS REALLY NASTY OUT THERE. EVERYTHING'S COVERED WITH ICE!!
GET UP, BEN! IT'S FREEZING IN HERE!!
NO KIDDING...
SHELTON

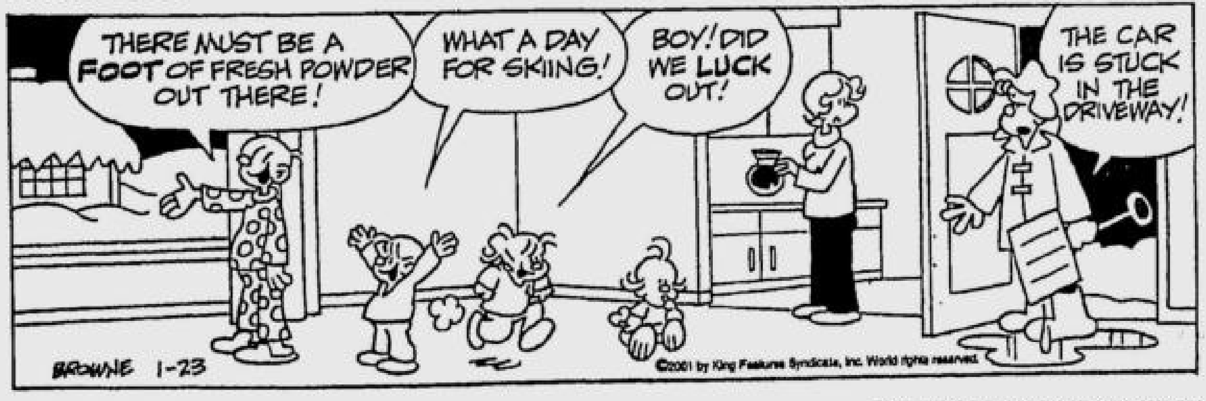
MUTTS

BY PATRICK McDONNELL


YOU'RE IN LOVE WITH A LI'L PINK SOCK!?!
YESH.
EVER SINCE WE MET SHE'S ALL I THINK ABOUT. WE HAVEN'T BEEN APART FOR A SECOND. I'M OBSHESSED!!!
IT'S ALL CHEWED UP.
ISN'T SHE THE CUTEST?
1-23

HI AND LOIS

BY BRIAN & GREG WALKER


THERE MUST BE A FOOT OF FRESH POWDER OUT THERE!
WHAT A DAY FOR SKIING!
BOY! DID WE LUCK OUT!
THE CAR IS STUCK IN THE DRIVEWAY!
BROWNE 1-23
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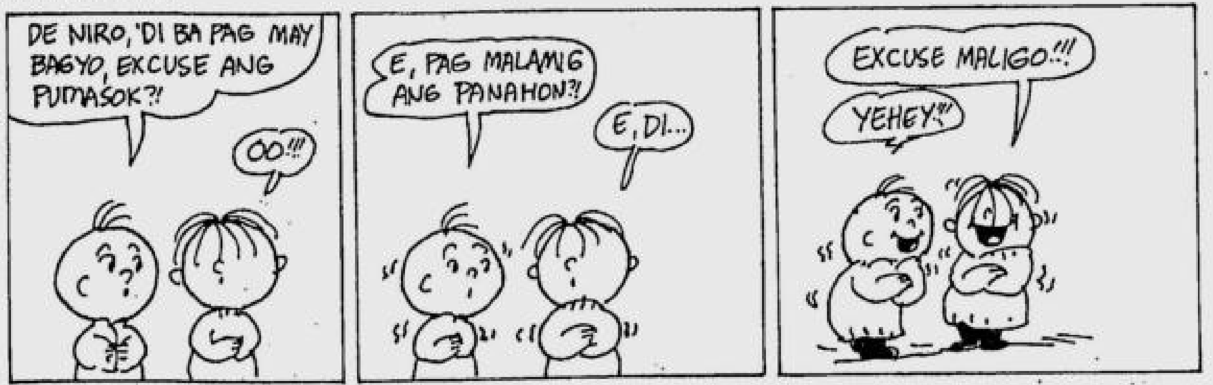
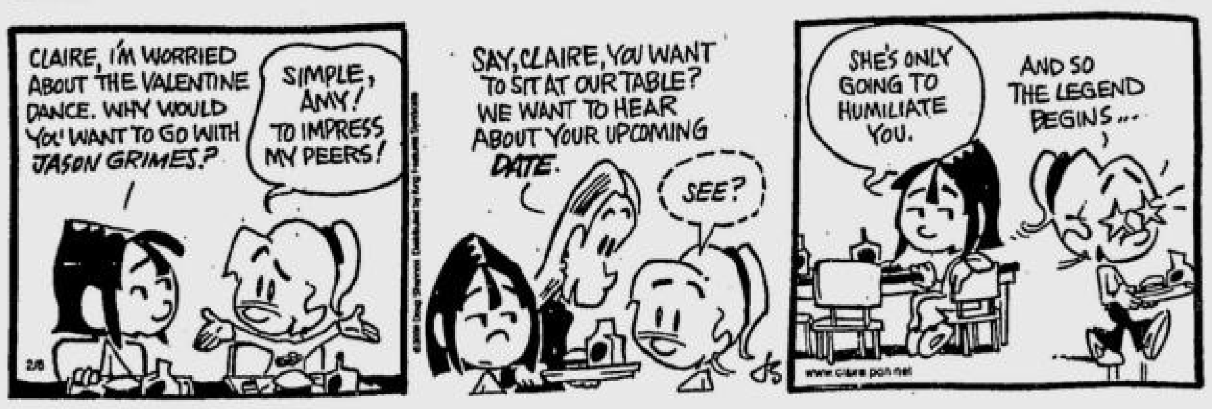
LOVEKNOTS

BY ELIZABETH CHIONGLO


DE NIRO, 'DI BA PAG MAY BAGYO, EXCUSE ANG PUMASOK?!
OO!!!
E, PAG MALAMIG ANG PANAHON?!
E, DI...
EXCUSE MALIGO!!!
YEHEY!!!

CLAIRE

BY DOUG SHANNON


CLAIRE, I'M WORRIED ABOUT THE VALENTINE DANCE. WHY WOULD YOU WANT TO GO WITH JASON GRIMES?
SIMPLE, AMY! TO IMPRESS MY PEERS!
SAY, CLAIRE, YOU WANT TO SIT AT OUR TABLE? WE WANT TO HEAR ABOUT YOUR UPCOMING DATE.
SEE?
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Keys to a longer life

Live Now, Age Later: Proven Ways to Slow Down the Clock
By Isadore Rosenfeld, M.D.
Warner Books, 2000
457 pages

By Cathy Babao Guballa

THE #1 NEW YORK TIMES BESTSELLER
by the author of Symptoms and The Best Treatment
ISADORE ROSENFELD, M.D.
LIVE NOW
AGE
LATER
Proven Ways to Slow Down the Clock

NO one can stop the march of time but something can be done about its consequences. Such is the premise of the latest book on aging "Live Now, Age Later" by Isadore Rosenfeld, M.D., a Rossi distinguished Professor of Clinical Medicine at the Weill School of Medicine in Cornell University in New York and attending physician at New York Presbyterian Hospital and Memorial Sloan Kettering Cancer Center. Dr. Rosenfeld, author of six best-selling health books, explains how aging is not a single process but rather the result of many changes in every system and organ of the body. From one's physical appearance to one's energy level, from arthritis to cancer and stroke, osteoporosis, heart disease, impotence, Dr. Rosenfeld tells the reader exactly how to delay, prevent and treat the signs of aging.

REVIEW

Layman's language

Unlike other medical, health or fitness books, Dr. Rosenfeld talks to his readers in simple and clear layman's terms. No medical gobbledygook here. Anyone who has been through basic Biology class in high school or college will easily understand the explanations and suggestions given by Dr. Rosenfeld in this comprehensive, medically factual work that is highly readable and sprinkled with warmth, wit and humor.

Each chapter deals with a specific aging complication, a diversity of diseases that afflict both men and women—chapter titles such as "Constipation: This chapter will really move you" or "Heart Attacks: A preventable epidemic" or "Libido in limbo," "Menopause: His and hers" make for easy reading despite the seriousness of the topic at hand.

For each condition, Rosenfeld presents the cause, symptoms, diagnosis, treatment and specific strategies for lessening one's risk. These may include diet, exercise, stress reduction, supplements and medications, depending on the condition.

In the chapter on menopause, Dr. Rosenfeld describes the symptoms of both female and male menopause ("yes, it does exist," Dr. Rosenfeld emphasizes) in specific detail,"The hot flush or flash is the hallmark symptom of menopause. It occurs in 50 to 75 percent of women. In the typical attack, the skin turns pink, sweat breaks out on your face, your back, or the front of your chest; you feel warm and your heart pounds. These symptoms usually last one to three minutes and are frequently followed by a chill. They may occur several times a day or only occasionally. They can be spontaneous or, more likely, happen when you're overheated, drinking alcohol, caffeine, hot liquids, or in the midst of a stressful situation. What precipitates a hot flash, as well as its severity and duration, varies from woman to woman, but every female's pattern is consistent and predictable."

Dr. Rosenfeld then goes on to describe the other menopausal symptoms and does a brief discussion on male menopause. "Of course, it's possible!" Rosenfeld jests, "Why else would the first three letters of menopause spell 'men'." He then says that male menopause occurs in about 40 percent of men and among the symptoms are depression, irritability, headaches, weight gain, decreased libido and diminished stamina, among others.

In the chapter dealing with Insomnia ("News You Can Use to Help You Snooze"), he suggests several ways to help you drift off to dreamland, age notwithstanding.

- Exercise regularly, Rosenfeld says, "preferably aerobically, for 20 to 30 minutes in the late afternoon, but not during the four to six hours before bedtime, and never just before you go to sleep." He adds, "If you warm your body with a workout in the late afternoon, it will cool down when you're ready for sleep."
- Don't become preoccupied with sleeping, and don't work at trying to fall asleep. That will only keep you awake.
- Don't smoke before bedtime. Nicotine is a stimulant; it raises blood pressure, makes the heart beat faster and causes your brain to be more active.
- Don't go to bed before you're sleepy. Wait it out somewhere other than your bedroom until you are.

To-do and to-remember list

At the end of each chapter, is a "what-to-remember list" that outlines the important points about each disease that the reader needs to take to heart. In the chapter on Alzheimer's, Dr. Rosenfeld cites the following salient points:

- Alzheimer's is a distinct disease of unknown cause that ultimately leads to dementia. It is not an inevitable accompaniment of aging.
- A family history of Alzheimer's only slightly increases your risk of developing the disease.
- Several agents, including antioxidants, anti-inflammatory drugs, hormones, gingko and Vitamin E, may reduce the chances of developing Alzheimer's.
- There are only a handful of drugs on the market for the treatment of the established form of the disease, none of which are very effective. Supportive care remains the basic treatment of Alzheimer's.

Not to be mistaken for a "miracle cure" book that will guarantee living to 120 with the mind of a 20-year-old, Dr. Rosenfeld's recommendations are moderate and medically conventional. For health book buffs, some of the suggestions and topics here may even seem so-so. However, by virtue of its easy-to-read style and the load of useful tips and knowledge it dispenses, "Live Now, Age Later" may in some way help you control your aging whether you are currently in your 30s, 40s, 60s or 70s and set you on the road to growing old gracefully.

E-mail the author at cbguballa@inquirer.com.ph

Chic 'athleisure' fashion

Football Sh

Boxer Short

HALF a century ago, no one wanted to be called a "jock." The term came into widespread use in US college campuses in the 1950s, when football players—known for their brawn and not their brains—were rudely referred to as "jock-straps," a reference to the athletic supporters they wore. Well, time surely changes everything. With the continuing interest in health and fitness over the last three decades—not to mention the astronomical salaries well-known basketball, football and baseball "jocks" earn—the once-disparaging nickname has lost its "inarticulate" and "unintelligent" connotations. Nowadays, it's perfectly acceptable to be called a "jock" and definitely fashionable to dress like one.

So where do Metro Manila's "envoys of chic" and street jocks go for the latest in athleisure styles? To the spanking new, 750-sq m Olympic World at the new Cinema and Entertainment Complex in the Alabang Town Center, that's where. At Olympic World, revered names in athleisure apparel, footwear and accessories (plus sporting goods and equipment) collectively make the strongest active fashion statements this side of the globe. Leading the pack are fashion brands like Doc Martens, Body Glove, Diesel, Karl Kani, Kickers, 33 Degrees, Republic of California, Johnny Blaze, Pure Bull, Fubu, Girl Star and Vans, to name a few, and sports and athleisure traditions like Nike, NBA, Adidas, Reebok, And 1, K-Swiss, Fila, Puma, Skechers, Speedo, Keds, New Balance and LA Gear, among others.

And it isn't just about athleisure fashion trend-setting at Olympic World. Olympic World is also about bringing sporty shopping to a higher level... and quite literally so. After all, fashion's got to have attitude, and attitude Olympic World's got lots of. Olympic World's got its own in-store rock-climbing wall, aptly christened Mount Olympus, so that the adventurous streak in every one of us can find expression in the extreme.

And it also boasts a basketball half-court where one can score not just fashion points, but also raise one's game and walk out of the store feeling like a real hardcourt star.

She wants to reconcile with her child's dad but doubts his sincerity

LIVE AND LET LIVE

Tita Dulce

DEAR Tita Dulce,

I am 23, a senior college student and single mother of a 2-year-old girl, the result of a relationship with a guy who, up to now, I barely know.

About a year after Ben became my boyfriend, he confessed that he had an 11-year-old son with a girl whom he got pregnant when he was 14 and the girl was 16. He said they lived together when she became pregnant but they separated and he doesn't love her anymore. He said he kept it a secret while he was courting me because he was afraid I'd reject him. I was deeply hurt, but a couple of days later, I took him back.

Later, I accidentally learned from his grandmother that he had a second child with the girl. The child was then 2 years old, which meant that his live-in partner was about to deliver or had delivered the baby when he began courting me. When I confronted him about that, he had the nerve to break up with me.

Stupid me begged him to stay. I had three stupid reasons: 1) I loved him so much and couldn't bear life without him; 2) he had taken my virginity and took advantage of that fact many times; and 3) given my "past" with him, I felt no other man would take me seriously. When my parents found out Ben's secret, they told me to break off my relationship with him. That, of course, didn't stop us.

In the third year of our relationship, I found out that I was carrying his child. He acted happy about it, but I wasn't convinced because he didn't face my parents when they found out. My parents kicked me out of the house and disowned me. I asked Ben's sister where I could reach him but she said he was staying with the other girl so she couldn't give me his address. I cried rivers, lakes and oceans of tears. After a couple of weeks my dad finally took me back and I returned to school pregnant.

Ben finally contacted me and asked for forgiveness. He said he could not yet provide for our kid so we should wait. I asked him if he would still marry me (since we went steady, we had talked about getting married). He took me to city hall and we got married. I now doubt though if it was legal. I found out only very recently that we did not meet one legal requirement: the submission of our parents' advice and our birth certificates to get our marriage license.

Ben went to Saudi. He wrote me several times, saying he was sorry for being away but he had to for our child's sake. He stopped writing five days before the baby came, and it was two months later when his friend called to say Ben was inquiring about the baby and me.

Eventually, we met again and reconciled. A couple of weeks later, though, I discovered that he had been in the country even before I delivered the baby. When I confronted him about it, he said he kept that secret from me because despite the job, he still had no money and he was afraid that I would desert him since he still couldn't support our new family. Even if I was much hurt by his behavior, I continued seeing him.

Tita, do you think Ben still wants our relationship to work out? Whenever I ask him, he says his other girl and their children will soon migrate to the United States—like he will soon be free to join our baby and me. I find that difficult to believe.

NINA

It is understandable that you doubt him. After all, Ben had lots of opportunities these past four years to earn your trust, but all that he's been doing is to disappear whenever you need him most, or to give you promises which he does not seem serious at fulfilling, or offer you excuses which you had no way of verifying.

Will he change for the better? Well, *hija*, anything is possible under the sun. But right now, from where I sit, the possibility is quite nil that Ben will cease to be a fraud anytime soon.

My impression of men like him is that many of them get tired of playing around when they are in their 50s or 60s. At that age—assuming that he truly loves you and that he'll survive fatal vendettas or shotgun weddings—Ben might choose to live the rest of his life with you and your daughter. By then, however, your daughter would be in her 30s and, therefore, she would have little use of the fatherhood that Ben has to offer.

By then, too, you would already be well past menopause. That means that should you then finally decide that you've waited for Ben long enough, and you take another man for a husband, then you would be unable to give that man a child and see how good a father that man could be. And that, in turn, assumes further that despite all the tensions you'll go through waiting for Ben those 30 or so years, you'd still be quite attractive to make a man decide to marry you instead of someone who is nearer to your daughter's age.

The point is, it's quite unlikely now that you and Ben will be together for good, and the longer you hang on to him, the less is your chance to start a better life without him. So, I say, dump him now and travel light to your future.

But you're a person complete and complex, *hija*. Your maidenhead is not the only thing that should define your worth. And if you'll recall how well you survived all the crises he's placed you in, and remember that you survived them without him to help you out, then it shouldn't be difficult for you to believe that you can redeem yourself from all these problems all by yourself.

I think your priority now and in the years to come should not be to rein Ben in. Your priority, rather, should be to finish your studies as well as you can, start a career as soon as you can, pursue it as best as you can, and be a single mother to your daughter as best as you can. And, believe me, *hija*, you can.

Never mind if your daughter grows up without a father beside her. Many successful people started without one, and many children are doing just fine without one. Siring a baby and raising a baby are two vastly different tasks. Ben has proven to be quite accomplished in the former, but, if I were you, I would not endanger my baby's and my sanity by trying to find out how well Ben would do in the latter.

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CORY QUIRINO - Host of Citiline and Author of Forever Young (Imedeen user for 2 yrs.)

Shot at Mandarin Oriental Manila

Pros and cons of Super Slow training

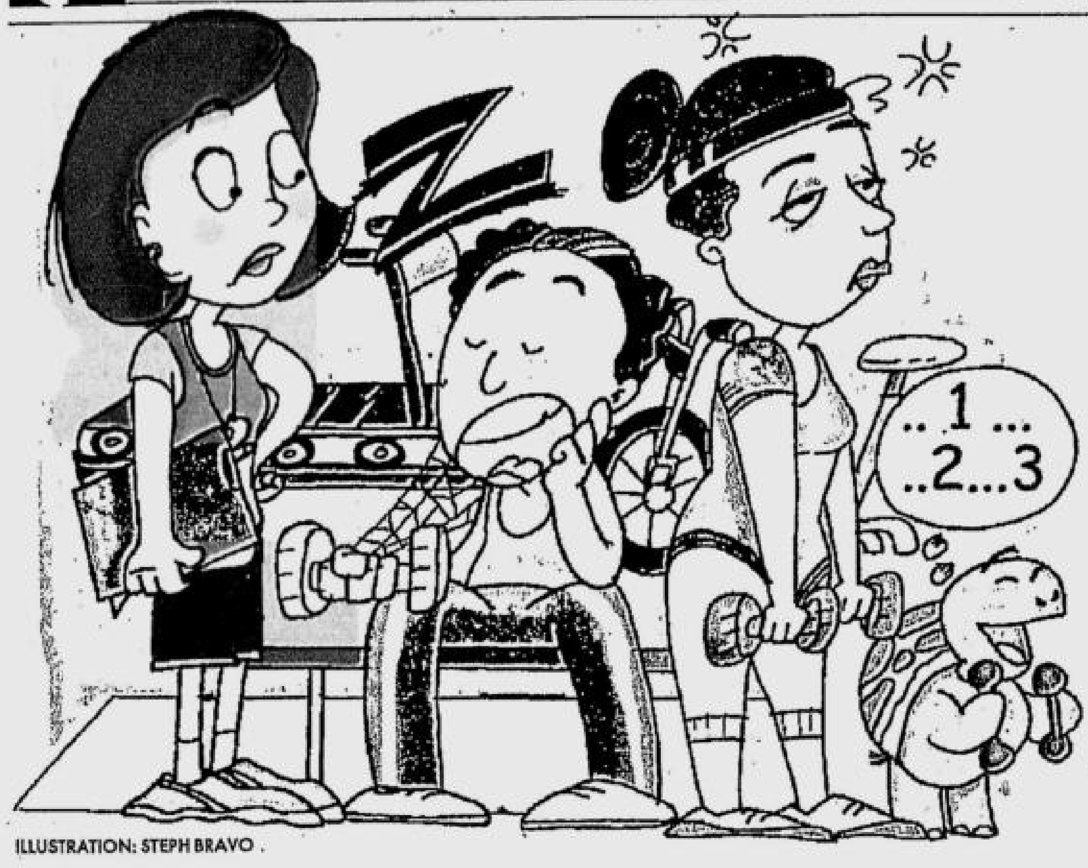

ILLUSTRATION: STEPH BRAVO

THIS came in from a reader via e-mail two weeks ago: "Newsweek carries a story on a new exercise program called Super Slow. It sounds very exciting—only 20 minutes once a week. I'm sure many of your readers will want to hear your comments about it."

The story the reader is talking about was published in the Feb. 12 issue of Newsweek (the one with the cover on drug addiction). For those of you who didn't read the article, Super Slow is weight lifting done in slow motion—10 seconds to lift the weight and four seconds to lower it. Ken Hutchins, the inventor of the technique, believes you only need to do a 20-minute session consisting of six exercises (10 repetitions each) once a week. Hutchins also believes this is all the exercise you need to stay fit for good.

WELL AND GOOD

Tina Aboitiz Juan

That claim is highly controversial and was, in fact, discussed during the 2000 AsiaFit Convention last November. Exercise expert Robbie Parker opened his seminar on "Controversies in Resistance Training" by challenging that claim. Parker stressed that while the concept is intriguing, there is no research to back it up.

Current research indicates that a complete fitness program includes aerobic, resistance and flexibility training. That translates into walking/running/cycling/etc. plus weight lifting plus stretching.

What is Super Slow training?

According to Dr. Wayne Westcott, author of the article "The Scoop on Super Slow Training" (Idea Personal Trainer Magazine, December 1999), it was invented by Hutchins in 1982 while working with female osteoporosis patients in the University of Florida. Since he was working with such frail patients, he decided the traditional speeds of lifting were too fast (an average of two seconds lifting, one-second pause and four seconds lowering). He was so encouraged by the progress of his patients using the Super Slow method that he began using it with men and women of all ages and abilities. By the early 1990s, the method had spread and became especially popular in the East, South and Midwest United States.

Studies done on Super Slow training

Westcott is also the author of the three scientific studies mentioned in the Newsweek article. He is the fitness research director for the YMCA. He did a study on beginner exercisers in 1993 and again in 1999. In both studies, he found that the Super Slow group increased their strength by 50 percent more than the regular speed group. A good thing to keep in mind, though, is that unlike the once-a-week claim of Hutchins, Westcott's studies involved three-times-a-week sessions.

Westcott also did a study using advanced participants in 1999. The study involved nine men and six women who had reached strength plateaus. This means they were not increasing in strength anymore with the existing programs they had. Westcott found that the Super Slow group experienced twice as much strength increases compared to the regular speed group.

However, as exciting as those findings are, you need to keep in mind that the study group was very small. More studies with greater numbers of participants are needed to validate this conclusion. Take note that this study also involved three-times-a-week sessions.

Advantages

A big advantage is the smaller risk of injury compared to other methods of lifting because of the slow speed. Many joint injuries occur from lifting weights too fast. This is assuming, of course, that you are lifting with good technique. Poor execution, even if done slowly, will eventually hurt you (but you will get hurt a lot faster if you lift with a lot of momentum).

Another advantage of Super Slow training is that it can be used to "wake" up muscles that have gotten used to traditional methods. You see, the body is so marvelous at adapting to almost anything you give it that it needs variety about every four to six weeks if you want to continue to see results. Westcott calls Super Slow training an important tool in your strength-training toolbox. Just like you cannot build a house with only a saw, you cannot build the best body you can possibly have with only one method (this is a far cry from Hutchins' claim of being the only form of exercise you need).

One more advantage is the amount of time the muscle is placed under tension. This could be a key factor in why the participants who did the Super Slow method experienced greater gains in strength.

Disadvantages

The biggest disadvantage is that Super Slow training is physically and mentally demanding. That's why even though it would be a safe method to use with beginners, Westcott recommends a more traditional approach for people who are just starting to lift weights.

I did a lecture on Super Slow training exactly one year ago at a fitness seminar for the Association of Fitness Professionals of the Philippines, but I have not really experimented with the method myself. The few times I did try I was bored to death, and I found it very difficult to keep track of the repetitions. I challenged my audience of fitness trainers to try the method for themselves. To this date, very few have tried it and those who did reported to me it was difficult to stay motivated.

Robbie Parker feels that Super Slow training is not appropriate for athletes involved in power events. With good reason since the principle of specificity of training states that your body adapts specifically to the kind of training you give it.

Practical applications

If you are going to try this method, you need to lower the weight you are used to lifting by at least 30 percent. Do only one set of 10 repetitions (trust me, you won't want to do more) per muscle group.

Trainers familiar with the method recommend counting the seconds and not the repetitions (again, trust me, you will lose count). You should take two-and-a-half to three minutes per set. You could set a timer and just focus on counting

PROS/ p.C3

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Macapagal guest of honor at INQ7.net launch

PRESIDENT Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo will be the guest of honor during today's launch of INQ7 Interactive Inc., the joint venture company between Philippine Daily Inquirer Inc. and GMA Network Inc. The launch will be held at the GMA Network Center at the corner of Edsa and Timog Avenue. Invited guests are advised to come at 4 p.m. since the venue will be closed early to make way for the arrival of the President.

BY ARIES B. ESPINOSA

WE JUST can't get enough of our favorite morning paper, can we? When we get hold of today's issue of the Philippine Daily Inquirer, how we wish we could, right away, get the next day's copy. And the next. And the next.

While the stories and reports published in the INQUIRER can hold you in suspense for a day, eager INQUIRER readers who'd wish to follow the chain of events after the last copy comes out of the presses can now get their fill of the freshest news throughout the day on the Internet at www.inq7.net.

INQ7.net? Whoa. Stop the presses! Press refresh! Isn't the INQUIRER website www.inquirer.net? Aren't we getting a bit confused here?

"Not to worry," INQ7 Interactive Inc.'s president and CEO Dennis Valdes assures us. "Whichever name you type in, you will automatically enter the INQUIRER's official website."

The difference between the two domain names, Dennis explains, is just a matter of chronology. The difference in content, however, is enormous. Inquirer.net was created more than three years ago, presented almost the same way its broadsheet was published, with the addition of feedback mechanisms such as e-mail and interactive chatrooms, and some reader polls every now and then. Dennis calls it "purely a newspaper in the Web," and that was just about it. That was more than three years ago, and the INQUIRER was one of the first newspapers in the world to have a counterpart in the Net.

DENNIS VALDES

JESS YUSON
JUDITH DUAVIT-VAZQUEZ

The timing was perfect. Within a year, Inquirer.net was on top of the "hitlist" when it came to news portals in the Philippines. It enjoyed the popularity and credibility of the INQUIRER broadsheet. Inquirer.net was the first site Filipinos living and working abroad would open. By early 2000, Inquirer.net was among the 30 most visited news portals worldwide.

Inquirer.net's popularity reached its peak late last year, as the Philippines' first impeachment trial of a President began. Early this year, it became the 11th most visited news portal in the world – an unprecedented task for any Filipino website. By this time, however, a realization dawned that for the site to climb up some more, it needed the infusion of the other two components of tri-media: television and radio. It already had the country's number one newspaper as its main source of news. But what was a news portal for if all it offered were from printed sources? What was the Internet for if it didn't offer streaming audio and video whenever and wherever it was needed? What was the refresh/reload button for if a news portal didn't provide minute-by-minute accounts of breaking news?

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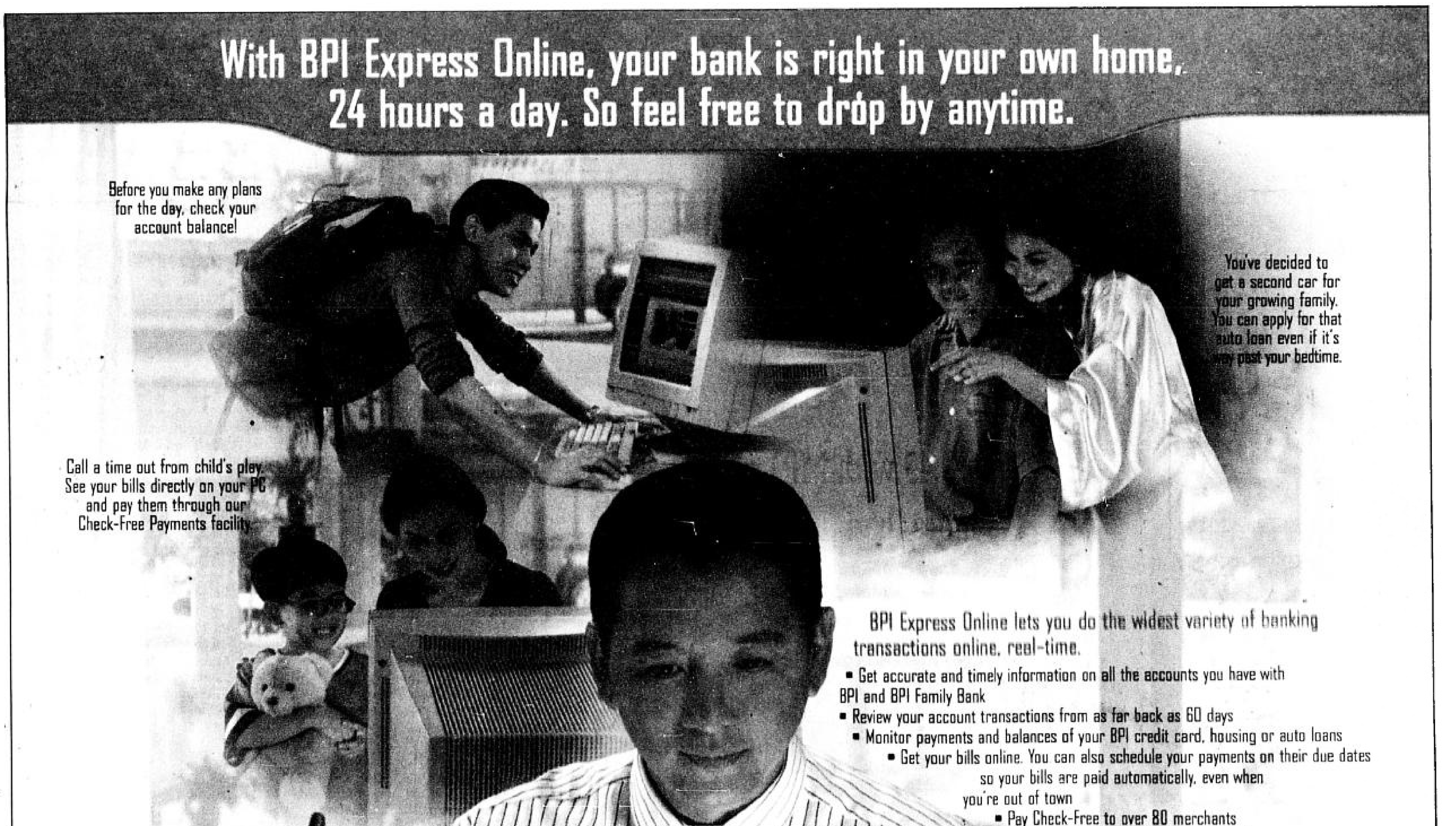
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INQ7: Prototype of the media of the future

BY RIGOBERTO TIGLAO
Editor-in-Chief, Inq7 Interactive

"THE MEDIA of the future is the news website."

Another one of those Internet hypes, techno-geeks' fantasies? Not at all. There's already a prototype: INQ7.net. It was even tested – successfully — during what most probably will be the decade's news event for the country – People Power II.

INQ7 was actually a fully functioning prototype. Just take a look at the figures. The website during that EDSA II week – based on data of its US-based service – was being read by about 400,000 people daily, about 90 percent abroad. That readership was bigger than the paper's daily sales of 250,000.

Even when the political crisis subsided, about 100,000 people daily are reading the online version of the Philippine Daily Inquirer, and that figure represents a steady rise from about 25,000 three years ago. Through the Internet, the Philippine Daily Inquirer has practically created an entirely new market of Filipinos abroad and of foreigners watching the Philippines.

In its coverage of People Power II, and the events leading up to it, INQ7.net demonstrated quite successfully why the website is the superior form of media than pint and television, why the future of media is in the Internet.

Read two of the many similar comments people sent to us, and you'll see why.

From former Canadian ambassador John Treleaven, writing from Saskatchewan, Canada, talking about INQ7.net:

"Unfortunately, no Canadian cable TV service carries ABS-CBN, so the coverage (of Edsa II) in this country was limited. Your excellent website saw us through this amazing period in the history of the Philippines. (My wife) Beverly and I spent many long hours refreshing the site frequently to stay current with "Breaking News" and your minute-by-minute updates."

But what about CNN? Filipino expat Wing Chua's e-mail from New England to one of INQ7.net's editors:

"There was no coverage of Edsa II in CNN or the US Networks because they were all in the middle o f the Bush inauguration weekend. So, the only source of news (on Edsa II) I had was the Internet.

"I particularly want to highlight that 'button' that you had, wherein the page was on real-time mode, updating highlights of what was happening every 5 minutes. Every time I refreshed the screen, a new update would come on... so, again, just imagine that I was up all night just clicking and clicking the refresh button... waiting for the news when Erap finally left. That function of your page really answered what I needed that very moment, information *kaagad* ("instant information")."

To understand why the Internet will be the media of the future, consider the following.

- A newspaper really contains yesterday's news. At the latest, everything you're reading now in print was written and delivered to the press at 11 p.m. yesterday.

But a website can be updated, even its entire contents changed, 24 hours a day – and news, whose delivery is media's task, is by definition, new information.

INQ7.net even crunched, so to speak, that time horizon. First it reported news as they broke out. This roughly entailed a 30-minute lag time, for editing and uploading it in the website.

For instance, at around 4 p.m. on Jan. 19, the newspaper website already had its banner headline, "People Power Overcomes," with the story pegged on the breakaway of the Armed Forces of the Philippines. The print edition would hit the streets to report that story only the next day.

INQ7.net actually was "crunching" the lag-time to approach real time, through its own "Running Account" technology started during the impeachment trial. "Estrada is waving goodbye," the site's "What's Happening" reported, a minute after the actual event.

- But television does that, doesn't it? Yes, but there's a big difference, and here's where we can show why Internet as a media form is superior not only to newspapers but to TV as well. If you had a long night on Jan. 19, as many Filipinos did, and woke up at 5 p.m., you wouldn't get on television what happened as soon as you turned on the set., whether Estrada already left the Palace or not. Well, you can, but you'd have to wait and hope TV does a replay.

But the news on the website is *on-demand*. In INQ7.net's "What's Happening" format, you just had to log on, and check what's happened to Estrada in the hours you were asleep, and there's a minute-by-minute account. Did you miss that edition of "Saksi" because you were stuck in rush-hour traffic? Just click and retrieve that episode in the Web's video section.

Other than these two advantages of a news website – it's "updatability" and its "on-demand" feature – there are three others neither a newspaper nor television doesn't have:

- **Archivability.** You'd like to check what Clarissa Ocampo said in her testimony? Just click on the website's search button, and you'll find it. You can't do that in television. You'd have to go to the INQUIRER's library to find that particular issue you need. If you had just come from a week-long dive trip sometime in mid-October, and wanted to find out what this 'Juetengate' was all about, you didn't have to go to the library. All you had to do was to browse the "Bad Times," and the earlier "Bad Bets" special sections of INQ7.net. You need to know who are the new president's key officials? Just go the site's "Gloria Days" section. Everything you want to find out is there, just mouse-clicks away.
- **Space.** Especially because of soaring print costs – which make up 70 percent of a Philippine newspaper's, expenses – you probably didn't find the entire "Articles of Impeachment" against Estrada in any newspaper. You can in the news website: After all, that document occupies only probably a millionth of the hard-disk space that contains all of INQ7.net's data. In a newspaper, it would have occupied maybe a third of the edition.
- **Interactivity**. That's a technospeak word for a basic marketing or even product-development principle. The consumer would want that his views have some impact on the product he buys. That's not just a gimmick: Thousands, or hundreds of thousands of people, would know how your product could be improved. It's actually a small rare breed of people who would take time out to write a letter, put it in an envelope, and bring it to the mail box. In a website, though, all it takes is just a click.
- **Unlimited Reach.** There are still of course financial constraints – you need to pay around $3,000 monthly for to operate a website that gets 100,000 eyeballs daily, but you can put up practically free a site that gets 100. But the big and obvious advantage of a news website from a newspaper is that the cost of producing and distributing a single "copy" is theoretically zero.

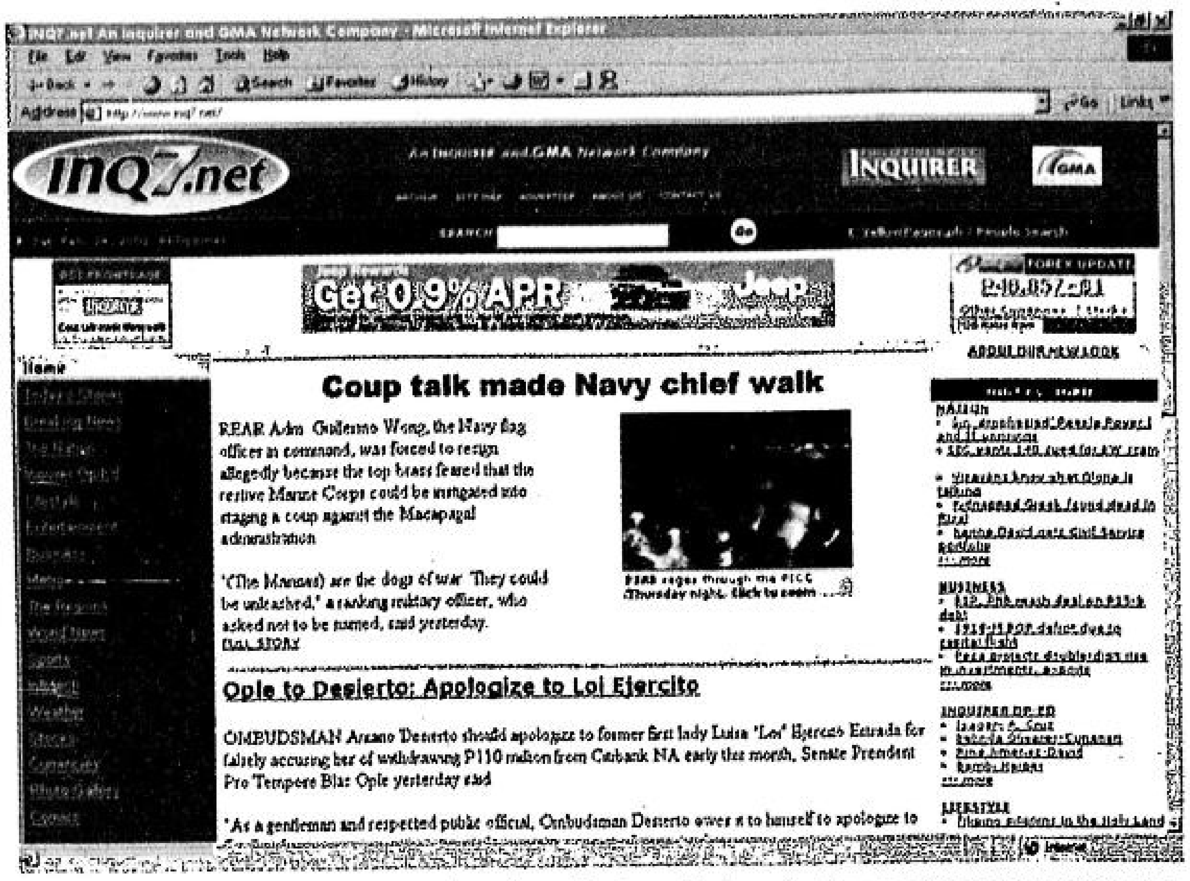
And its reach and accessibility is theoretrically unlimited. You don't need to find a newspaper stand to read INQ7.net. People from places like Auckland, Jeddah and Utrech actually get to read the Philippine Daily Inquirer hours earlier than the print edition, which has to be printed and then distributed.

Quite obviously though, one would need a computer and an Internet connection. But there's over 500 million Internet users today, and the figure is rising everyday. In this decade, computers with Internet connections will be as ubiquitous as telephones and TV.

Of course, you can't bring your PC to the toilet, or read Web news on the way to work.

Well, you can't have everything. But many even say that in the next five years, with the explosion in mobile phone and miniaturization technology, you will.

So the only downside for the news website is that you can't use it to swat a fly.



INQ7.net An Inquirer and GMA Network Company - Microsoft Internet Explorer

File Edit View Favorites Tools Help

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ABOUT OUR NEW LOOK

Home

Coup talk made Navy chief walk

REAR Adm. Guillermo Wong, the Navy flag officer in command, was forced to resign allegedly because the top brass feared that the restive Marine Corps could be instigated into staging a coup against the Macapagal administration

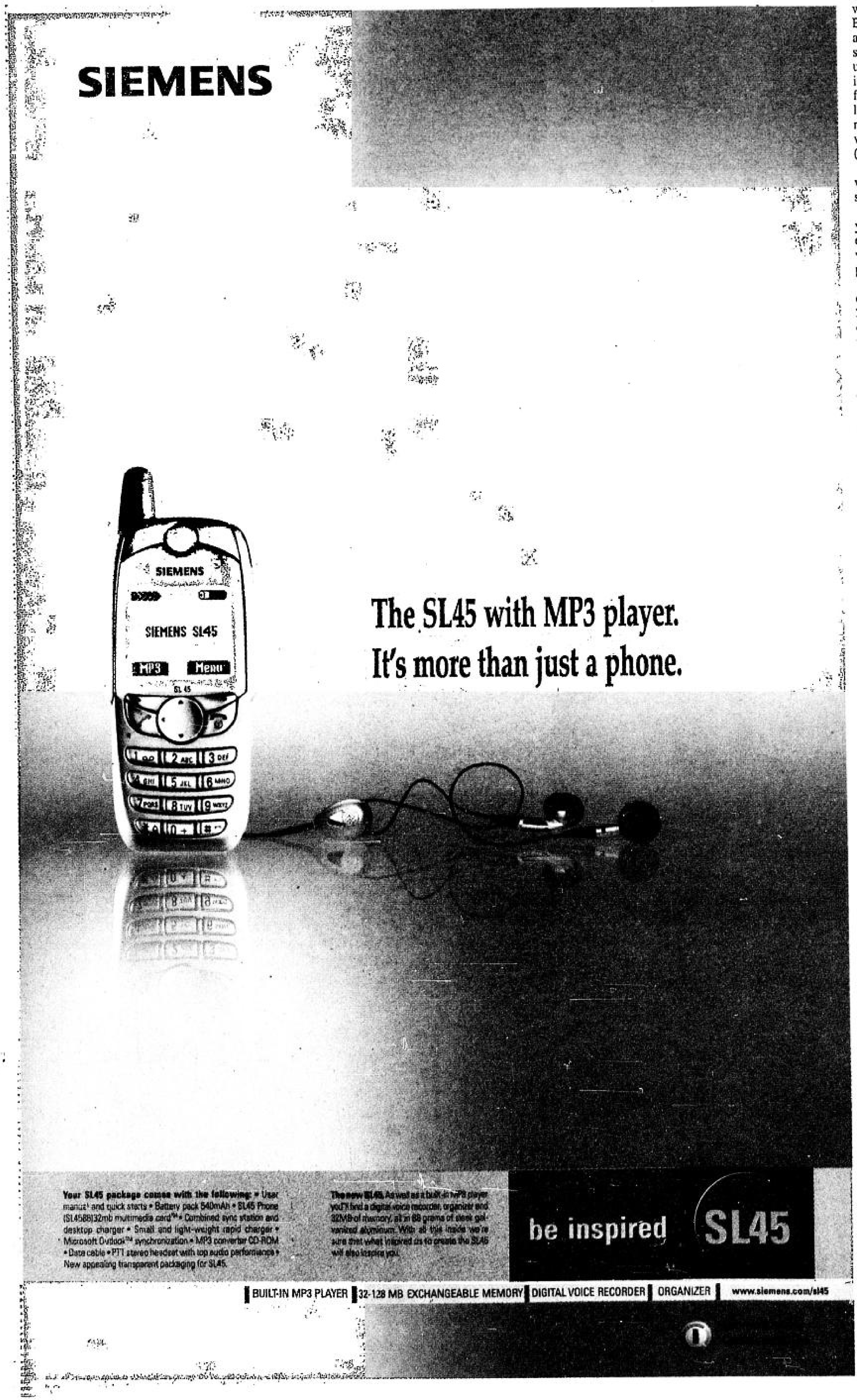
'(The Marines) are the dogs of war. They could be unleashed,' a ranking military officer, who asked not to be named, said yesterday.
FULL STORY

Ople to Desierto: Apologize to Loi Ejercito

OMBUDSMAN Aniano Desierto should apologize to former first lady Luisa 'Loi' Ejercito Estrada for falsely accusing her of withdrawing P110 million from Citibank NA early this month, Senate President Pro Tempore Blas Ople yesterday said

'As a gentleman and respected public official, Ombudsman Desierto owes it to himself to apologize to

THE WEBPAGES of the new INQ7.net have been fine-tuned to be as light as possible in terms of file size, despite the fact that more elements have been added. Soon, the pages will be compressed, further decreasing file size by 40 percent.



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Online journalism . . . (From page D3)

Filipinos outside the country. In leading the way toward the online revolution in news delivery, INQ7.net will continue balancing immediacy and accuracy, innovation and credibility. And even though it is a young company, the INQ7.net brand builds upon the trust that INQUIRER and GMA have won from Filipinos.

"Shortly after the Dec. 30 bombings, we received an e-mail from a website visitor in California who told us that he learned about the event from our site, then called his wife in Manila and told her about it. She was about to go malling and had not heard the news. The e-mail shows how news has to be delivered instantaneously and how the combination of Internet and telephone can achieve this. In the future, we're going to get important news delivered via SMS — not on a pull but on a push basis. And when the text comes from the INQ7.net website, you can be sure it has the credibility of the INQUIRER and GMA behind it, unlike most of the text messages that get passed around today," Valdes said.

In the end, INQ7.net is about letting viewers experience the news and making them a part of every important event, as it happens.

"The knowledge that we are instrumental in allowing our countrymen access to their homeland's inspiring events has meaning and value which go beyond that of gold. After all, news, in its purest sense, is public service," Duavit-Vazquez said.

So, what's the latest news? Find out on the website with balanced news and fearless views — where they and you belong.

Online journalism comes of age in the Philippines

BY JOEY G. ALARILLA

WHEN historic events shape the nation, it takes a new brand of journalism to tell the full tale.

INQ7.net came of age with People Power II, just as in 1986, a young newspaper called the Philippine Daily Inquirer vaulted into the lead by being at the forefront in covering the events that led to the collapse of the Marcos regime. A joint venture between media giants Philippine Daily Inquirer Inc. and GMA Network Inc., INQ7.net—the next incarnation of www.inquirer.net—has rapidly evolved to address the needs of a global online audience.

The extensive online coverage of Edsa II did not happen overnight, though the whole INQ7.net team worked feverishly night after sleepless night to make it happen. From the moment the site broke out the results of the Senate vote on the second sealed envelope on Jan. 16, the up-to-the-minute Running Account of the Estrada impeachment trial evolved and kept pace with the rapid turn of events. That very night, continuing breaking news coverage of the spontaneous indignation rally at the Edsa Shrine saw INQ7.net setting up a People Power II special site. INQ7.net provided up-to-the-minute text, audio and video coverage of People Power II, particularly with the What's Happening running account of the historic events.

At the peak of its People Power II coverage, in a single day INQ7.net generated two million page views, meaning the site's webpages were viewed two million times in just one day.

From its beginnings with text messages urging the people to take to the streets to the time ousted President Joseph Estrada finally abandoned Malacañang, INQ7.net was there to let Filipinos throughout the nation and the world take part in People Power II. The site succeeded by combining the traditional strengths of INQUIRER and GMA while creating new content that fully harnessed the power of an emerging news medium: the Internet.

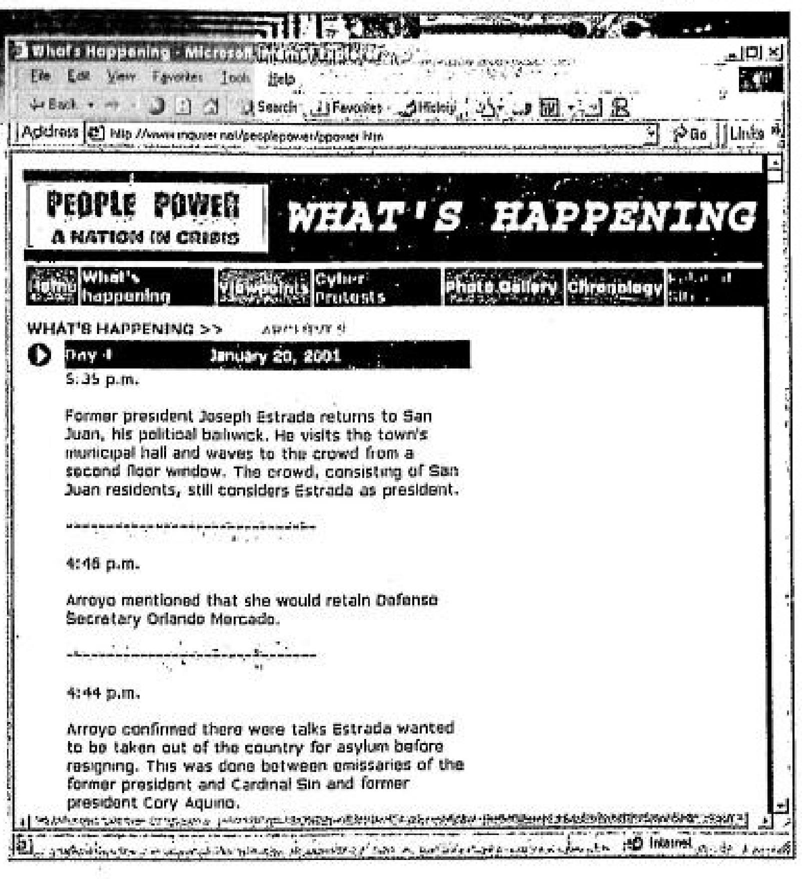
"I believe the Internet is a fourth news medium and will develop its own niche of consumers. TV, print and radio will also continue to thrive as long as they serve the needs of their consumers. Already, consumers are using all these media interchangeably. At home, they might watch TV; on the MRT, they might read the newspaper; in their offices, they might use the Internet; and while walking on the street, they might get SMS (short message service) news updates on their phones," said Dennis O. Valdes, president and CEO of INQ7.net.

True to the character of the Internet, the evolution of INQ7.net and the online revolution in Philippine journalism take their cue from the actual needs of the online audience. This is a two-way street wherein INQ7.net responds to viewer demand and feedback while at the same time raising the bar for the visitor's online experience of the news. Since the time INQ7.net launched the Breaking News section and the first online special in October when the "Juetengate" scandal broke out to the site's new look today, interactivity has been the key.

"GMA is amazed at the power and influence of the Internet in the delivery and sourcing of breaking news reports. A wonderful feature of the Internet is its interactivity with viewers. The Internet allows us to reach global pocket communities of Filipinos — whose sizes do not warrant a local cable channel — 24 hours a day! Millions of Filipinos were glued to their computer monitors during the impeachment trial and People Power II coverage. And many more will be glued to INQ7.net in the years to come," said Judith Duavit-Vazquez, chair of the board of INQ7.net.

The challenge in harnessing the power of the Internet is the need to exercise even greater responsibility, particularly since the site is the main source of news for many

ONLINE/ D2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WHAT'S HAPPENING >>

Day 4 January 20, 2001

5:35 p.m.

Former president Joseph Estrada returns to San Juan, his political bailwick. He visits the town's municipal hall and waves to the crowd from a second floor window. The crowd, consisting of San Juan residents, still considers Estrada as president.

4:46 p.m.

Arroyo mentioned that she would retain Defense Secretary Orlando Mercado.

4:44 p.m.

Arroyo confirmed there were talks Estrada wanted to be taken out of the country for asylum before resigning. This was done between emissaries of the former president and Cardinal Sin and former president Cory Aquino.

Circling the globe with fresh news, fearless views through Microsoft Windows Media technology

BEHIND INQ7.net's daily supply of incisive news accounts, provocative insights and startling multimedia updates to hundreds of thousands of people around the world is the only Internet broadband-ready platform designed for the creation, distribution and playback of broadcast-quality digital media and CD-quality audio.

INQ7.net is using Windows Media Encoder 7, Microsoft's latest easy-to-use, powerful production tool that enables content developers to convert both live and pre-recorded audio, video, and computer screen images to Windows Media format for live and on-demand delivery.

Powered by Windows 2000 Advanced Server—Microsoft's latest operating system platform specifically designed to power business-critical workloads such as e-commerce sites and line-of-business applications—the Windows Media Encoder 7 enjoys enhanced encoding capabilities such as support for deinterlacing, inverse telecine, and screen capture.

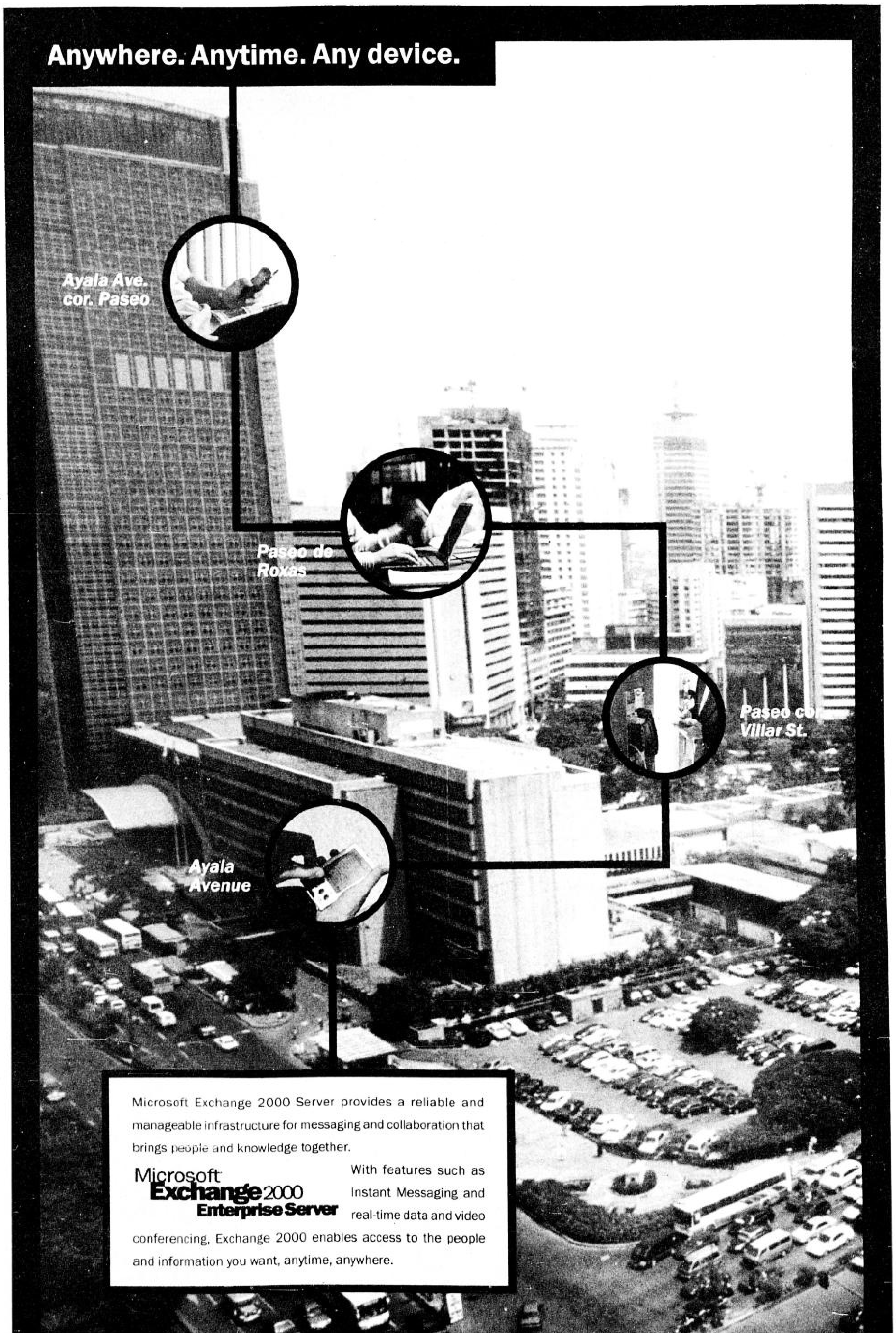
"Microsoft lauds INQ7.net for its exceptional ingenuity and spirit in making socio-economic-affecting news available to millions of people worldwide. It's a massive responsibility when one has to creatively keep people aware, informed, educated and entertained day after day after day. We are very happy that our technology is helping INQ7.net in fulfilling this commitment not only to the media industry but also to society in general," said Microsoft Philippines general manager Richard Francis.

According to Wilson Chua, president of Bitstop Inc. which spearheaded INQ7.net's December 7 rollout of Windows Media 7, the technology has significantly expanded the educational experience of Inquirer readers.

"INQ7.net is experiencing over 1 million hits a day without a hitch, thanks to Microsoft Windows Media Server technology. The streaming media allowed Inquirer readers to not only read the news but also to experience the sights and sounds of some of today's most compelling events here and abroad. It's truly a multimedia experience," Chua explained.

A Microsoft Certified Solutions Provider since 1998 and the only Windows Media Service Provider in the Philippines, Bitstop is an information technology processing and webcasting expert responsible for deploying and maintaining Microsoft-based solutions to large companies.

For more information on Windows Media Server, you may access the Microsoft website at www.microsoft.com.



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Microsoft

THE INQ7.net management committee is composed of (from left): Leo Magno, executive editor; Jalu Go, VP Finance; Edna Belleza, VP Sales & Linkages; Judith Duavit-Vazquez, chairman; Dennis Valdes, president & CEO; Rigoberto Tiglao, editor-in-chief; Bobby Gantuangco, VP-Technology; and JV Rufino, executive editor.

Formidable partners . . .

(From page D1)

Inquirer.net needed not just a popular broadcast network, but a credible one—a network that would complement the INQUIRER style and thirst for balanced and fearless reporting. The requirements were rigorous, but the choice was easy. As easy as the acronym for the new Philippine President seated by People Power II.

'Beautiful opportunity'

It was a perfect match. Here was Inquirer.net, searching for a broadcast network to add "webcasting" capabilities to its already formidable content in the Net. And there was GMA Network News, whose news website needed a credible, industry-leading print media base to add muscle to its own content. The attraction was irresistible. The opportunity was too good to pass up.

"What we really appreciated from GMA is that they have been very open. They realize that if we put the resources of two media giants together, you can really grow your news website," Dennis says.

The company that was formed with the union of INQUIRER and GMA—INQ7 Interactive Inc., wasted no time in going down to business. As matters of incorporation were put to paper, INQ7.net's webcasts had already begun. "We had a handshake agreement with GMA 7 that even if we were not officially INQ7.net yet, we were to be a working organization in a 50-50 share of the resources," Dennis discloses.

In fact, INQ7.net was just officially incorporated last Feb. 20. Long before that, however, the partnership had made its mark. "The strongest video that we have had on the Web was the coverage of the (Estrada) impeachment trial, the 'Saksi' and the 'Frontpage' videos. We would have missed a beautiful opportunity to deliver if we had decided to wait for the legal matters to get done first," he adds.

No. 11

The impeachment trial and the resulting People Power II in Edsa catapulted INQ7.net to No. 11 in the 100Hot listing (www.100hot.com). This position becomes all the more remarkable when one considers the websurfing population of the Philippines compared to larger, more populous and developed nations.

"The top 10 news sites are all US-based. It's a good sign that a lot of Filipinos around the world are interested in the Philippines, as 93 percent of our page views are from overseas," Dennis reveals.

Update on-the-fly

When you handle the content of the country's number one news portal, and around two million pairs of eyes are looking at your site everyday during a particularly crucial period of the country's history, what do you do? Pack your bags and call it a good day's work, or hang on for an even more exciting ride?

Leo Magno, INQ7 Interactive's Executive Editor, gets goose bumps every time he recalls INQ7.net's record-breaking feat at the peak of People Power II last January. Instinct tells him, however, that INQ7.net is on a hot roll. He'd definitely want to be up front when INQ7.net rides the next big wave and breaks into the top 10.

Leo's "surfboard" is the Running Account feature of INQ7.net, and is greatly respon-

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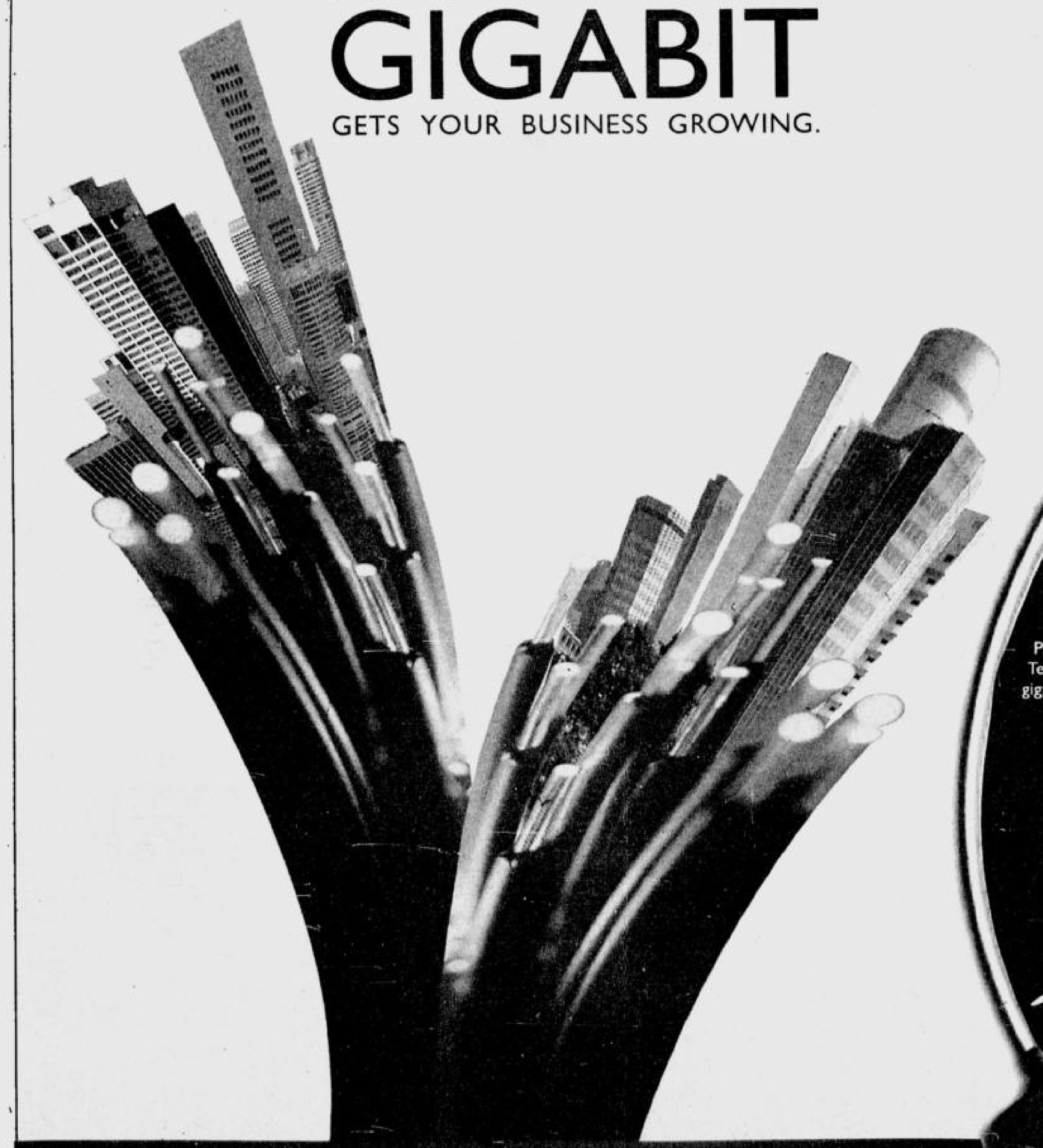

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Pop quiz, dotcom hotshot: 'How long will INQ7 last?'

BY LEO MAGNO
Executive Editor, INQ7 Interactive

THE ROLL call of speculative bubbles have dotted the financial markets, and the Cassandras have announced the crash of the dotcom era. Last year, no one listened, and garage after garage were converted into virtual offices, with many a geek hoping to make it on the dotcom bus. However, instead of getting on the bus, a dotcom bust instead happened.

This year, dotcom wannabes are dipping their toes in the water before plunging in. They should feel cold, after last year's market correction on Wall Street. Having risen a record-breaking 88 percent in 1999, the Nasdaq composite index of tech companies rallied higher in the first quarter of 2000. On March 10, the index reached a record 5048. In the dying weeks of the year, it traded at less than half this level. The index has recorded its worst ever annual performance in its 29-year history.

Back home, the Philippine Stock Exchange also showed lukewarm reactions to the listing of Dfnn.com, the first "true," non-backdoor dotcom to list on the local bourse. Granted, the country might have learned its lessons from the Wall Street dotcom bubble, but could it also be said that the Philippines also missed out on an opportunity?

Company officials of INQ7 Interactive Inc. don't think so. The Philippine Daily Inquirer and GMA Network Inc. launches today INQ7.net — the first dotcom venture of the two media giants. INQ7.net is a 50-50 joint venture of the two companies, geared to become an online, real-time, multimedia news delivery organization. Despite the dotcom thrills which led to spills in Silicon Valley, INQ7.net is boldly testing the waves on the Internet.

"Whatever is happening with dotcoms, the rationale for our Internet business remains: Combining the news efforts of GMA, the most awarded TV network, and the INQUIRER, the most credible newspaper, can only result in the best quality news service to Filipinos around the world," said Dennis Valdes, president and CEO of INQ7.net. "We believe this long-term vision of providing first class news via the Internet is an excellent business foundation."

"We are beyond a dotcom play," added Laura Jimenez-Westfall, board member of INQ7.net. "We are backed by the two most credible news groups in the country. The INQ7.net strategy is the natural progression of moving both GMA Network and INQUIRER from old media to new media."

To "boldly go where no bald man has gone before" could be an understated motto for this group. In a time when next quarter's profit projections are not much higher than Imelda Marcos' weekly shoe allowance, INQ7.net believes it will get something out of the venture in only three years.

"The first mover advantage and the Internet audience of INQ7.net puts us in the lead to reap financial rewards earlier than our competitors," said Judith Duavit-Vazquez, the company's board chair. "Coupled with this are the lessons learned from the failures of the dotcoms, which ensure that INQ7.net manages its financials prudently. Altogether, we expect our ROI within the first three years of operations — at the latest."

One way the company intends to do this, according to Jimenez-Westfall, is by focusing on the two companies' core competency — news. Therefore, instead of falling into the portal herding instinct of other websites (websites which want to be one-stop shops or those which call themselves "super-mega-ultra-portals" for Filipinos), INQ7.net intends to focus on what it does best — deliver credible news fast and accurately.

"We intend to leverage on our combined strength in news," said Jimenez-Westfall. "With all the portals out there, people want focused sites. They want to go to a site and know what to expect. That is what INQ7.net offers — branded news content readily available, with a strong focus on real-time news and information."

"We remain true to our identity as the No. 1 news website in the Philippines, and the Asian region," added Duavit-Vazquez. "To lose sight of this is a mistake."

What makes the union between INQUIRER and GMA even more interesting is that, aside from being a dotcom in these unsure times, it is a partnership in the middle of media consolidation and mergers happening in the industry. INQ7.net officials believe in this consolidation of media organizations rather than seeing the Internet as a competing medium.

"Rather than perceive new media as a threat, traditional media companies are collaborating to leverage their respective strengths into riding the IT revolution. This is the essence of the INQ7.net venture," Jimenez-Westfall said. "What will be important is the context in which the individual uses the information. In the past, many thought that with the advent of television, radio and newspapers will become obsolete. What we witnessed is the opposite — these different forms grew stronger and they thrived on each other. We see however that due to the changing habits of people and the speed that information can now be moved around the world, we see a global audience starved for real-time information. With the advent of up-to-date, credible news at their fingertips, we foresee that online news would eventually be the primary source of information."

"Computers and the Internet infrastructure are going to get faster," Valdes added. "In one or two years, consumers may not be able to perceive the difference between watching the Internet versus TV."

Sounds familiar? Maybe it's because you really have heard these words before — probably from some dotcom which rose out of a garage in Silicon Valley. Yet, unlike most dotcoms, INQ7.net is the progeny of a technological marriage between two established news organizations — one in print and the other which has both TV and radio. And, since the parent companies are focusing its Internet news strategies on INQ7.net, chances are these strategies won't be scrapped as fast as the dotcom bubble burst last year.

Asked if INQ7.net is built to flip or built to last, Valdes said: "I think it's clear that INQ7.net is built to last. We're founded on excellent brick-and-mortar businesses which have no reason to look for a flip."

"GMA 7 does not flip companies," added Jimenez-Westfall. "We invest in them with our heart and soul to add value, synergy and convergence to our wide and varied media network operations."

"We will be here as long as GMA and PDI exist," added Duavit-Vazquez. "And that is for decades to come."

Formidable partners in webcasting . . .

(From page D4)

sible for the record-breaking 2 million page views in a day.

Leo explains the dynamics of the Running Account. "The editor accesses an in-house generated webpage containing a news entry form. The editor writes what's happening straight to that form and clicks on a button which FTPs (file transfer protocol) the page straight to our server in the United States. That means, straight from the editor's minds and fingers, he gets to update the Running Account page on the fly. This part gets updated every minute or so."

The possibilities for the Running Account, Leo enthuses, are endless. Sporting events, other sensational trials, Congress and Senate sessions and inquiries, the list goes on. The next big wave may even come this May, during the national elections and the traditionally action-packed vote counting.

Webcasters

Leo, who had spent years as part of the editorial team of the INQUIRER broadsheet, analyzes the evolving skills and responsibilities of the new breed of journalists working with the Web. "Journalists are adjusting to the Web. News delivery is getting faster. You have to get people who write, think and act faster. It's also becoming a multimedia world so you might see journalists writing for a paper but has a digital video camera for use as streaming video report or audio report in a website. He or she metamorphoses into a webcaster."

The metamorphosis is indeed evident in the INQ7.net offices at the Rufino Building in Makati City. Leo and his team get video and audio from GMA TV and radio stations, and then "repurpose" them as text articles for breaking news, for SMS (text messages) or WAP (wireless application protocol) or as independent articles.

"If stories from PDI and GMA are conflicting, we quote both camps and endeavor to get the real score," he avers. Leo adds, however, that most GMA content will be presented as video. The writing will undergo marked changes. "We're trying to keep the stories lean. We need to adjust to the viewing public of INQ7.net."

Not serendipity

Contrary to fears that INQ7.net may eventually render the INQUIRER newspaper obsolete, Dennis says INQ7.net is in fact, making the broadsheet stronger. "Because we have become so strong on the Web, what's happening is that INQ7.net is also lending credibility to INQUIRER and GMA. There's synergy already."

Readers and surfers might want to consider an interesting coincidence. The Philippine Daily Inquirer was catapulted into popularity amid People Power I in 1986. Now, 15 years later, INQ7.net is launched amid the euphoria of People Power II. Is it really just a coincidence, a lucky accident for the INQUIRER?

Dennis would like to think otherwise. "LJM (PDI editor-in-chief Letty Jimenez-Magsanoc) has a word for it, which she borrowed from Deepak Chopra. It's called 'synchronicity.'"

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Power disturbances such as surges, sags, blackouts and brownouts can seriously damage sensitive electronic equipment and cause computer-system downtime. In fact, power problems are the largest cause of data loss, counting for 45.3% of all problems.

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APC's Back-UPS range is an affordable line of reliable UPS products geared for the home or small business. An APC Back-UPS instantly switches your computer to emergency battery backup power and allows you to work through brief power outages or to shut down your system in the event of an extended outage. Even though you may already own an Automatic Voltage Regulator (AVR), this alone is not enough to fully protect your PC system as it will not provide EMI/RFI filtering, back-up power or power management like an APC Back-UPS.

APC Back-UPS Award-Winning Features Include:

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- **1 surge protected** outlet protects your laser printer from catastrophic damage due to surges and spikes
- **Two year warranty** (including batteries) provides peace of mind in your purchase
- **User replaceable** batteries can be swapped out without shutting down connected equipment
- **EMI/RFI Filtering:** Back-UPS shields against high frequency electrical noises that damage files and create software errors.
- **Compact design** Back-UPS is available in a space-saving design for desktop computers

Standard AVR Versus APC Back-UPS Features

	AVR	UPS
surge protection	yes	yes
EMI/RFI filtering	no	yes
back-up power	no	yes
power management	no	yes

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WAP-MP3 phone up for bidding at iAuctions

INQ7 Interactive Inc., the joint online news delivery company of Philippine Daily Inquirer Inc. and GMA Network Inc., will give its viewers a chance to bid for various items on iAuctions, the website's online auction site.

The main auction item at Iauctions is Siemens' SL45 with built-in MP3 player WAP (wireless application protocol) mobile phone. This "smartphone" has a built-in MP3 player, exchangeable 32-Mb memory and digital organizer capabilities.

INQ7.net viewers will get their chance to bid for these MP3 phones beginning March 5. The iAuctions site will be created for INQ7.net by its partner, SurfingBananas.com.

"The Siemens SL45 mobile phone is our main auction item, and we'll have not just one, but four units up for bid, so there will be more chances for our readers to own this MP3 phone," said Edna Belleza, INQ7.net vice president for sales and business development.

For its part, Siemens information and communications (Communication Devices) assistant vice president Baby Revilla said that Siemens and INQ7.net's partnership is a strategic move to reach the Philippines' growing online community.

"We are proud to be partners with the country's No. 1 website and we think that our SL45 mobile phone, with its many sophisticated features, will be greatly enjoyed by the lucky readers who will win the bid for our phones in iAuctions," Revilla said.

The Siemens SL45 offers easy synchronization of Microsoft Outlook addresses and calendar entries between PC and phone; uncomplicated transfer of data files including MP3, digital voice notes, SMS, ringer tones, animations and pictures using a special plug-in for Microsoft Explorer; storage for Word, Excel and Powerpoint files and digital voice recordings. Users can also transfer up to five hours of multiple digital voice messages from the phone to the PC.

The Siemens SL45 also has a built-in MP3 player. Users can travel with their own personalized music compilations by dragging and dropping individual tracks and then simply encoding CDs onto a portable card which, at 128 Kbps, is also of CD quality.

Revilla added: "the SL45 is the next milestone in Siemens' development as a youthful, dynamic and stylish brand. The role of design is almost as important as the role the latest technology plays. We see the sleek and confident character of the SL45 as a statement about how far Siemens mobile phones have come in the last year."

For more details on how to bid for the Siemens SL45 WAP phone with built-in MP3 player, visit www.inq7.net.

INQ7 leaves global news leaders behind in 100Hot

BY GERRY A. PLAZA

WEBSITES can draw a loyal following for its entire life, while more popular Net offerings could post visitor figures a tad beyond the entire Filipino Internet user population for its week- to month-long existence. But what particular Filipino site churns in hundreds of thousands, even millions, of page views globally on a daily basis?

It's INQ7.net, the joint news website of the Philippine Daily Inquirer and GMA Network Inc., which owns the distinction of having posted the largest page view count for a local website in history — 1.8 million at the height of People Power II on Jan. 18. Apart from our site statistics, INQ7.net's leadership is recognized in a well-respected Internet ratings site, 100Hot.com, wherein it has figured prominently since late last year as multimedia coverage — using text, audio and video streamcasts — were initially offered.

From its entry at No. 40 in late August 2000, Inquirer.net (INQ7.net's predecessor) rose to No. 34 as Ilocos Sur Gov. Luis "Chavit" Singson's allegations of former president Joseph Estrada's involvement in illegal gambling pay-offs and excise tax kickbacks lit up the political scene by mid-October 2000. During this period, Bad Bets, a special site which details Singson's allegations against Estrada and relevant articles and links on the issue, was offered.

As Blue Ribbon Committee investigations made incisive probes on the Singson allegations "in aid of legislation" by early November, the site featured a new section, 24H, which offered breaking news reports on relevant national and local events as they happen. This led to a substantial increase in visitor turnout that resulted in an increase in ranking in the same 100Hot list, from No. 34 to No. 26 in only two weeks' time.

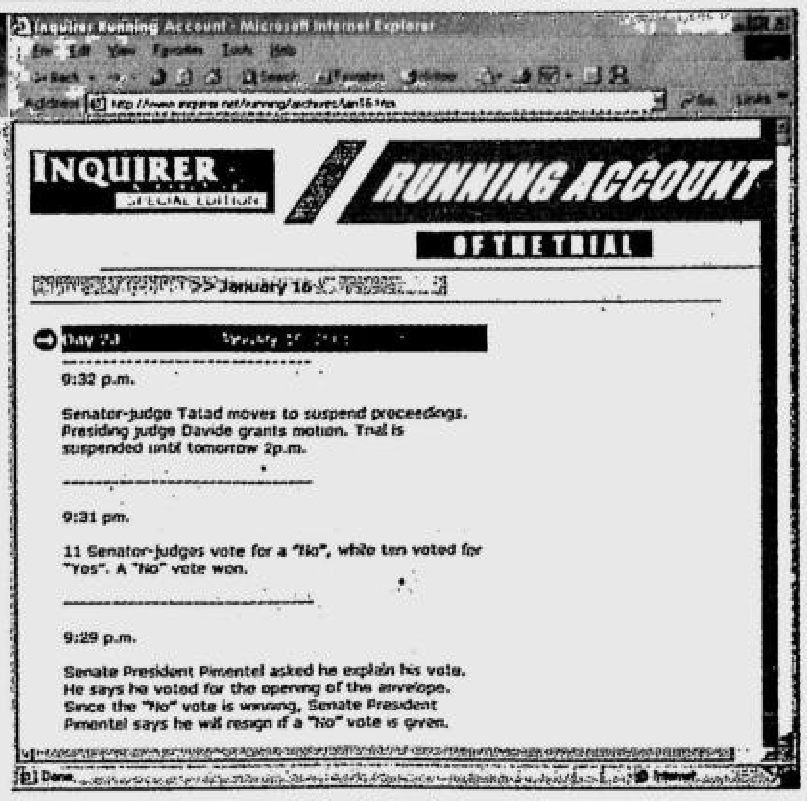
As top government and legislative officials withdrew their support to Estrada amid presentation of incriminating evidence linking Estrada to the charges, visitors around the world have glued their URLs to the site waiting for more developments in the Blue Ribbon investigations — anticipating a possible impeachment by the House of Representatives. At this time, the site moved up to No. 24.

By mid-November, as the House of Representatives impeached Estrada, which led to the unprecedented Senate trial accusing the former leader of bribery, graft and corruption, betrayal of public trust and culpable violation of the Constitution, INQ7.net became the most sought-after resource in getting the latest news on the historic event. A special section concentrating on the impeachment trial was introduced. It offered timelines and descriptions of previous impeachment cases in the United States and around the world, including impeachment motions filed against former Philippine presidents. By this time, the site was hovering from the No. 23 to No. 21 position in the 100Hot list.

After the impeachment trial started on Dec. 7, INQ7.net first offered streamcasts of GMA Channel 7's live coverage of the proceedings straight from the Senate. A key feature of the coverage is the text-only Running Account of the proceedings wherein minute-by-minute, blow-by-blow text-based updates on the trial were presented on the special site. Visitors would get to know trial developments the exact moment they transpired. This took the site to unchartered heights in the global Internet community, entering the top 20 on the first week and then No. 19 on the third week of the impeachment trial. The site bested international heavyweights in the newspapers category of the 100Hot site, including the Wall Street Journal, Washington Post and the San Jose Mercury News.

The trial took a momentous turn on its 23rd day on Jan. 16 when 11 senator-judges voted not to admit key evidence potentially damaging to Estrada. This caused immense public uproar and the outrage led to the second People Power protests on the capital's main highway calling for Estrada's resignation and ouster from office. INQ7.net became the top Internet news site on

INQ7/ D9



INQUIRER SPECIAL EDITION
RUNNING ACCOUNT OF THE TRIAL

January 16

9:32 p.m.

Senator-judge Tatad moves to suspend proceedings. Presiding judge Davide grants motion. Trial is suspended until tomorrow 2p.m.

9:31 pm.

11 Senator-judges vote for a "No", while ten voted for "Yes". A "No" vote won.

9:29 p.m.

Senate President Pimentel asked he explain his vote. He says he voted for the opening of the envelope. Since the "No" vote is winning, Senate President Pimentel says he will resign if a "No" vote is given.

THE Running Account of the Estrada impeachment trial was partly responsible for INQ7.net's climb to No. 11 in the 100Hot index.

Edsamail extends support to INQ7.net

EDSAMAIL extends its support to INQ7.net in bringing greater opportunities to more people through information and access.

Last year, in cooperation with INQ7.net, Edsamail held seminars on online advertising as part of its ongoing educational campaign. The series of Online Ad Workshops, attended by top advertising agencies and their clients, provided an overview of the Philippine Internet Users' Profile and trends and discussed the opportunities, power and benefits of online advertising to reach a specific target audience.

"Through the online advertising workshops, we discovered that there is not only interest but genuine hunger for information about new marketing approaches like permission marketing and customer relationship management that is supported effectively and efficiently by e-mail," Margot Torres, general manager of Edsamail Philippines, said.

With Edsamail's growing number of subscribers and advanced software developments, both advertisers as well as the users are guaranteed effective and efficient quality of products and services. As the country's expert e-mail company, backed by a Filipino R&D team and supported by investors, including iAyala, Yuchengco Group of Companies, Evoserve, and New Era Holdings, Edsamail continues to expand and diversify its operations to be able to promote information and communications technology and provide access to more people.

On the celebration of its first anniversary, Edsamail is proud to announce that it has over 500,000 subscribers, making it the largest ISP in the country. Presently, Edsamail processes 10 million e-mails a month.

With technology partners, IBM and Microsoft, Edsamail is able to efficiently and successfully manage millions of e-mails monthly, affirming the company's capacity to service all of its subscribers.

Edsamail's strategy has been successful in so far as both product development and subscriber growth is concerned, with offices and operations in the Philippines and in Singapore. There are other expansion plans underway that aim to make Edsamail more visible in the region. Moreover, Edsamail will be introducing new products this year, starting with pre-paid Internet cards.

After only a year of operations, Edsamail has launched three versions of its software that gives people free e-mail (not web-based) as well as free dial-up access. The latest 1.3 version has two unique features, personalized e-mail addresses, and check other POP3 mail for free.

Congratulations to the Philippine Daily Inquirer and GMA7 on its joint venture.

[redacted]

Last year, over 500,000 people moved to a new address.

Edsamail acknowledges the more than 500,000 subscribers who have contributed in our first year's success.

Yes, it's a double celebration for Edsamail! It's our first anniversary — and we're proud to celebrate it with over 500,000 subscribers! And we continue to be excited because this is just the beginning: Edsamail is backed by superior technology and a strong, dependable network that is ready to serve our fast-growing subscriber population.

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Partners contribute to dotcom growth

BY JOEL D. PINAROC

HOW does a dotcom compete for eyeballs and revenues in a dotcom world where the viewers and the money come easy and go easy?

Although no one has the crystal ball to tell exactly if a dotcom is bound to fail or succeed, some of the golden rules of otherwise "traditional" business, also known as "brick-and-mortar" businesses, are apparently still applicable and should be earnestly followed by dotcoms.

It is easy for dotcoms to say that they are the "one-stop" shop to provide all the needs of online users. The problem is how to do exactly this and how to make readers come back to your site again and again. Ever so often, dotcoms which think of only culling information into their sites in the hopes of being a "portal" fall flat on their faces.

For INQ7.net, the trailblazing joint venture of the Philippine Daily Inquirer and network giant GMA Network Inc., the solution seems simple: Stick to your core competence and seek quality partners to beef up your content.

Edna Belleza, INQ7.net's vice president for sales and linkages, said the first goal for INQ7.net is to offer both breadth and depth in its already formidable content.

Although INQ7.net has distinguished itself as a premier source of online news, Belleza said content, beyond news would play a major role in attracting online users to "stick" with INQ7.net.

"We know that news can cover so many things but we also realized that certain content categories cater to a significant portion of our market. For instance, we found out early on that many of our readers are interested in business, lifestyle and information technology," Belleza said.

These content, Belleza said, should complement an organization's main thrusts, which in INQ7.net's case is news.

It seems that "merger" has always been a key word for companies wanting to leverage on another company's strength. In the case of INQ7.net, however, there has been a deliberate effort on the part of the company's executives to be extra-careful in choosing partners for the site.

"Almost always, it's too risky and too expensive to try to do everything by yourself. Most of the time, it doesn't make sense because you would end up re-inventing the wheel," Belleza said.

Content partners

Belleza goes on to say that INQ7.net has decided to beef up its sections through several partners that are considered experts in their own fields.

For instance, Belleza said, the Business section of INQ7.net will soon provide daily in-depth stock market analyses and advisories, not only on the local bourse but also of key Asian markets through a partnership with Interactive Data Systems or IDS. INQ7.net has also partnered with Bridge Information Systems for the site's peso-dollar exchange rates.

INQ7.net also has an agreement with Singapore-based ZDNetAsia, one of the premier online news providers in the Asian region, for the provision of various information technology (IT)-related news and features, to beef up the Infotech section of INQ7.net

For the Lifestyle section, INQ7.net has partnered with GetAsia, which now owns Clickthecity.com, a local dotcom focusing on providing city guides online.

"We believe a cityguide will increase the stickiness of our lifestyle and entertainment sections," Belleza said. "While it's true that a lot of our traffic comes from abroad, a study by an Internet research group based in Australia (consult.com.au) also shows that we are the most-visited Philippine site even among locals. Also, the cityguide is a useful tool for those planning to visit the country."

Belleza added that the selection of Inq7.net partners is not based on somebody else's whim nor is it based on gut-feel alone.

"In many cases, feedback from our readers helped a lot in determining the kind of information we need to add to the site. For instance, because of requests for more weather information, we decided to partner with Weathernews Inc. Users can now see animated weather and natural disaster maps on the site similar to those seen on television," Belleza said.

With GMA 7 also providing additional content to site, Inq7.net is poised to become an even bigger player in online news and content provision.

Partnerships allow INQ7.net to quickly widen its reach and acquire the necessary technology to give the best in news delivery.

For instance, by partnering with Globe and Smart, INQ7.net is now able to reach the mobile phone users. They can now download the latest news summaries anytime, anywhere.

INQ7.net also partnered with Bitstop Inc., who came up with the necessary applications to make it possible for popular GMA programs, such as Saksi and significant video clips be streamed to online viewers the world over through INQ7.net. INQ7.net also worked closely with Home Cable, Infocom, Microsoft and DigitelOne to make this possible.

"There are other areas of content partnerships. We are talking to some local publishers about getting their content on our site and entering into syndication deals," she said.

E-commerce partners

It does not end there, Belleza said, as INQ7.net is also seeking to form strategic alliances to explore more opportunities, one of which is e-commerce.

"Strategic alliances help us explore different opportunities but at the same time, allow us to continue to focus on what we do best, which is to deliver timely, accurate and balanced news," Belleza said.

She added that INQ7.net is now in the process of building a marketplace for interactive services.

"We have chosen some partners who will provide not just the technology but also the skills to run such specialized services, she said. "The first two services we are rolling out are a shopping service in partnership with myAyala.com (to be called iShopping) and an auction service in partnership with Similan.com (iAuctions)."

With the myAyala partnership, INQ7.net will be able to help merchants who want to get on the Web but do not have the resources to build their own backend operations. This means the shopping section will not be limited to merchants found in the "brick-and-mortar" Glorietta mall. On the auctions side, INQ7.net will be able to provide its members (people will be required to register to bid and sell) access to the regional market because Similan operates the SurfingBananas sites across Asia.

Advertising partners

A third group of partners is not readily recognizable, but they contribute to the biggest chunk of revenue for most websites. These are the advertisers.

"In many ways, advertisers are our most important partners," Belleza said. "We work with them closely in developing advertising campaigns and strategies that meet their business objectives on the Web. For instance, we have targeted banner advertising for many of our advertisers. We also developed different sponsorship packages, like Bank of the Philippine Islands' long-term sponsorship of our foreign exchange section and e-YellowPages for business search." INQ7.net also help its advertisers get more acquainted with Internet technology and explain to them the benefits and mechanics of online advertising.

"In fact, we are open to working with other dotcoms in this area," Belleza said. "Last year, we worked with Edsamail in conducting an online advertising forum for agencies. This year, we are supporting a group of Internet marketing professionals that is organizing an even bigger online advertising event. We believe that the more dotcoms participate in these efforts, the better it is for the online advertising industry as a whole." Belleza also stressed that some misconceptions about Internet advertising should be cleared.

"For instance, online advertising is not a zero-sum game versus traditional media," she said. "The fundamentals are still the same: Advertisers still need to complete their media mix and they have to focus on the market and their message. The Internet should be very exciting for advertisers and ad agencies because it gives them more ways of reaching their market and allows them to be more creative in the execution of their campaigns."

Although hopes are high, it is too early to say if INQ7.net will reap the more "tangible benefits" (Read: revenues) of its pioneering efforts, although company officials are targeting ROI within three years. What is clear it seems, is that the company is on the right track.

INQ7 leaves . . .

(From page D7)

People Power II which eventually led to the removal of Estrada from the presidency and the assumption of Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo to become the country's 14th head-of-state.

The event became equally historic for INQ7.net as it registered the most page views for a Filipino site ever, posting not less than one million in each day during People Power from Jan. 17 to 20, 2001 with the highest turnout recorded at 1.8 million page views on Jan. 18. Because of this, 100Hot ranked the INQ7.net No. 11 on Jan. 24, setting an unprecedented feat in Filipino online journalism.

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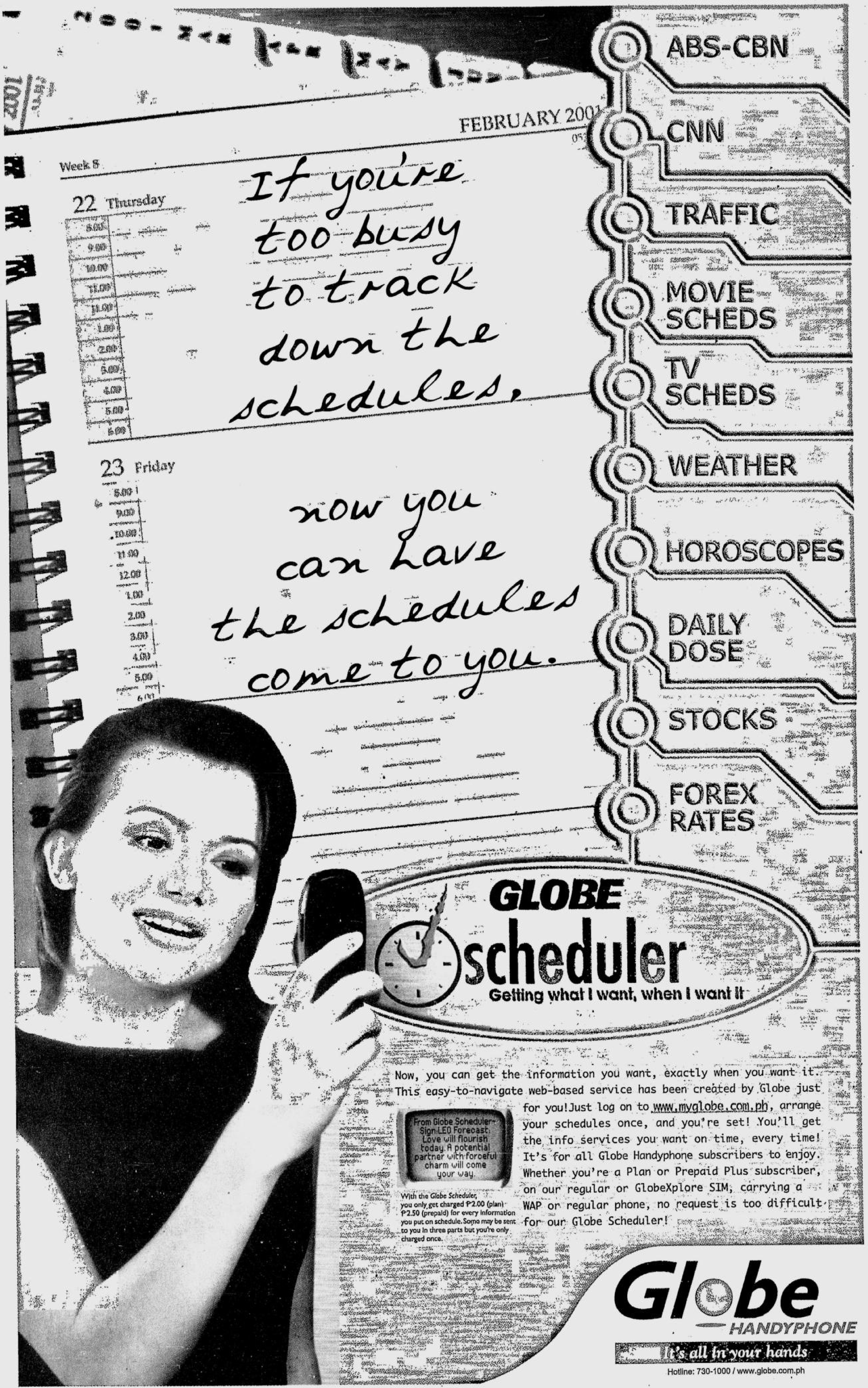

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